United Nations S/PV.5895

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5895th meeting

Tuesday, 20 May 2008, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Miliband	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Chastel
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Tiendrébéogo
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Costa Rica	Mr. Weisleder
	Croatia	Mr. Jandroković
	France	Ms. Yade
	Indonesia	Mr. Cotan
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Ettalhi
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	South Africa	Mr. Lekota
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad
	Viet Nam	Mr. Hoang Chi Trung

Agenda

Post-conflict peacebuilding

Letter dated 2 May 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2008/291)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Expression of sympathy to the Government and people of China in connection with the recent earthquake and to the Government and people of Myanmar in connection with cyclone Nargis

The President: At the outset of the meeting, I should like, on behalf of the entire Security Council, to extend our heartfelt sympathy to the Government and people of China in connection with the earthquake that occurred in Sichuan and resulted in immense devastation and heavy loss of life. I request the representative of China to convey to his Government and the families of the victims our sincere condolences for the tragedy that they have suffered. In a similar vein, I would like, on behalf of the Security Council, to extend our sympathy to Myanmar and its people following the devastation caused by cyclone Nargis.

May I invite all present in the Chamber to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of the victims of those disasters.

The members of the Council observed a minute of silence.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. President, for extending sympathy and condolences to the Chinese Government and people on behalf of the Security Council, as well as for mourning the loss of Wenchuan earthquake victims. I will soon report to my Government and convey the Council's sympathy and condolences to the families of the victims. I am confident that, with the concerted efforts of the Chinese Government and people and the strong support of the members of the Security Council and other countries and international organizations, China will prevail in its earthquake relief efforts.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Post-conflict peacebuilding

Letter dated 2 May 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2008/291)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of a large number of countries, namely, Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Chile, Egypt, El Salvador, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Jamaica, Liechtenstein, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand and Turkey, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. I am obviously delighted that there is such a large number of countries that want to contribute to this debate. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I request the Protocol Officer to escort His Excellency Mr. Nikola Špirić, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to a seat at the Council table.

Mr. Nikola Špirić, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Nikola Špirić, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

On behalf of the Council, I also extend a warm welcome to Her Excellency Mrs. Zainab Hawa Bangura, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the other aforementioned *countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.*

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Marwan Muasher, Senior Vice-President of the World Bank; to Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, who is well known to us; and to His Excellency Mr. Yukio Takasu, Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Japan.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/2008/291, which contains a letter from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

Our intention in calling for this debate is to put the international spotlight on what can be done to ensure that stabilization and recovery efforts are more effective, in particular in the period immediately following a ceasefire or peace agreement. There is a huge challenge before us, namely, to remove millions of people from the prolonged effects of conflict, to take away the fear that they will suffer the same horror again and to give them the hope of sustained peace, security and prosperity.

There are some admirable examples of the United Nations and the international community tackling conflict and saving lives, with bravery, intelligence, dedication and skill. But those examples are not the rule; in fact, sometimes they are the exception. We are not doing enough, and we are not doing well enough. Our concept paper offers our thoughts on the critical gaps that hamper international efforts and I look forward to hearing participants' perspectives in the course of this debate.

To start, it is important that we hear the testimony of people with direct experience of these challenges. I look forward to Foreign Minister Bangura's contribution. We also look forward to the contribution of the Senior Vice President of the World Bank. And we look forward to the contribution of Mr. Brahimi, with his experience in Afghanistan, Iraq and other areas, as well as with his being the author of the landmark report on peacekeeping (S/2000/809).

But first, I would, of course, like to welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, at this meeting. He is on his way within the next hour and a half to Bangkok and then to Rangoon on very important business. We are very privileged to have him here. I know he has to leave immediately after his speech, but we are all very much looking forward to hearing what he has to say. I give him the floor.

The Secretary-General: It is an honour to join the Security Council this morning. I am grateful to the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom for bringing us together to discuss the critical question of how the international community can respond effectively in the immediate aftermath of conflict.

Over the past two decades, the United Nations has deepened its understanding of what it takes to prevent a relapse into conflict. We have learned how to better create space for national authorities to establish processes for sustainable peace, security and development. Lessons from many countries — the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, Timor Leste, Haiti, Burundi and Liberia — all demonstrate that, while each context is different, there are three common and immediate priorities.

The first is to establish viable political processes to buttress peace agreements and to put in place legitimate national authorities. The second is to restore security and the rule of law, including early development of professional and accountable security services and justice systems. The third is to deliver immediate and tangible benefits to the affected population and create enabling conditions for longer-term development.

How, then, can we strengthen our collective response in the immediate aftermath of conflict and deliver on these critical priorities?

First, we must be coherent. While the primary responsibility for rebuilding after conflict undoubtedly belongs to national authorities, the United Nations has a major obligation. My Special Representatives are responsible for coordinating the response of all United

Nations actors in the field. We have put in place structures, planning and monitoring processes to support this effort in the immediate term and throughout the transition to longer-term peacebuilding.

But the United Nations is only one of several actors in the field. Regional organizations, Member States and international financial institutions contribute critical elements of a collective international response. Where we work together, as in Liberia or in Sierra Leone, we deliver a vastly more effective response. Coordination and clarity of leadership are critical to ensuring that each partner brings its distinctive strength to the broad collective effort.

Secondly, we need sufficient capacity. If the United Nations is to lead on the ground, my Special Representatives need to be empowered to do so. They need the means to identify strategic priorities, elaborate plans and mobilize funds with others, in particular development partners. By aligning, if not integrating, our respective instruments, such as reports to the Security Council, donor pledging conferences and relief frameworks, we can ensure that priorities are pursued consistently. We should also consider joint assessments and strengthened reporting to the Security Council on critical recovery needs, drawing on expertise from the whole United Nations family as well as from international financial institutions.

Thirdly, we need to build up civilian expertise. The small but agile United Nations standing police capacity is an important step in the right direction, as is the recent launch of the standby team of mediation experts. The creation of the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations reflects my commitment to a team approach to upholding the rule of law, security sector reform and respect for human rights.

But we remain desperately short of judges, prison wardens, state administrators and managers, particularly those with knowledge and experience of the countries and systems in which we operate. Not only should they be well equipped when they are deployed; they need start-up funding at their disposal. Many Member States and regional partners, including the European Union, are exploring ways of building deployable capacities in this critical area. We need to broaden and pool our efforts to deliver global resources for peace.

This need for civilian expertise also extends to recovery and development. We need to do much better in delivering early peace dividends. That means scaling up relief and development capacities to enable national authorities to pay their civil servants, restore agricultural life and initiate employment programmes. It may be time to draw on the experience of the humanitarian community in launching urgent recovery in a rapid and predictable way, including through greater use of local resources and capacities.

Ultimately, all of this requires early and flexible funding. Early investment does indeed entail risk. But the cost of failure and the potential for rewards are much higher. Bold and innovative steps are required to meet critical priority needs. To facilitate rapid delivery in the earliest phase, let us explore approaches such as a common start-up fund.

The immediate aftermath of conflict is the crossroads at which peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding meet. We need to ensure that the road taken is the one that leads us most rapidly and effectively to our goal of a nationally owned, sustainable peace, with strengthened national capacities. Many of these issues have been identified by the Peacebuilding Commission, which has a key role to play in supporting national actors in achieving their long-term objectives for sustainable peace and development.

Today's debate is, I hope, the start of a collective effort to reach that objective.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement. I am sure that the whole Council wishes him safety and success in his extremely important mission in Myanmar. We wish him good luck and thank him for his contribution this morning.

I am now very happy to invite the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone, Her Excellency Mrs. Zainab Hawa Bangura, to take the floor.

Mrs. Bangura (Sierra Leone): First and foremost, let me on behalf of the Government and the people of Sierra Leone join you, Mr. President, and the Security Council, in extending our heartfelt condolences to the People's Republic of China and Myanmar on their loss.

On behalf of President Ernest Bai Koroma and the people of Sierra Leone, I warmly congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May and to register my sincere gratitude to you for having invited me to participate in this important debate. We assure you and the other members of the Council of our fullest and unwavering support.

We deeply appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the discussion on this vital subject. The choice and timeliness of the theme is an indication of the significance that the Government of the United Kingdom attaches to the search for lasting peace and stability in post-conflict societies.

We in Sierra Leone are of the view that better funding and improved integration of international leadership are crucial components of post-conflict stabilization and national recovery. In this regard, the role of the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, which has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, cannot be overemphasized. Nonetheless, practitioners have raised questions about the tardiness of the involvement of the critical mass of the international community in responding to crises or early warning signals in order to contain a looming, explosive situation in certain spots. Consequently, observers have tended to interpret such delays in response as a function of the strategic significance that those spots represent within the international community. For instance, notwithstanding the destruction, carnage and mass displacement of hapless civilians throughout the Mano River Union basin, it took the United Nations a long time to endorse the timely and crucial intervention of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) peacekeeping force in the crisis that engulfed the neighbouring States of Sierra Leone and Liberia.

In all frankness, the rapidity with which the international community responded to crises in places such as Kuwait, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq, as opposed to many African crises, showed analysts the need to rethink the international community's approach to resolving conflicts around the globe. We are hopeful that the Peacebuilding Commission will not lend itself to such inadvertence or anomalies in supporting countries engaged in post-conflict peacebuilding.

Delivering sustainable peace is not only an act of enlightened self-interest, but also a public good for all of mankind and humanity. Experience has proven that conflict and social instability breed poverty, flagrant violations of human rights and human dignity, socio-economic disparity and social and political disintegration. The causes of conflict are much like their effects: poverty, low economic growth, ethnic and cultural intolerance, and the mugging of democracy, social justice and human dignity. Wrestling with this vicious cycle of instability and underdevelopment in our present global reality is, therefore, clearly not an act of charity.

In Sierra Leone, as in many other places that have been afflicted with a protracted, violent and devastating conflict, the road to peace has not been altogether smooth. But with tolerance, understanding and the overriding need to reconcile and move forward for the general good, even the pain, the mud and the thorns we have travelled through for peace have been our greatest healers. Today, we can reflect with pride on the recent presidential and parliamentary elections that witnessed a seamless transition from the former ruling party to the opposition. We have made a significant leap in our peace and democratization processes and laid a solid foundation for sustainable peace. The 2007 elections, in particular, speak eloquently of our political maturity and determination to achieve lasting stability. For this, we are thankful to the United Nations and all of our multilateral and bilateral partners for their support.

Despite the gains in implementing the Lomé Peace Accord and the successful conclusion of the disarmament, demobilization and re-integration (DDR) programme, we are still in the process of surmounting the hurdles inherent in constructing effective and legitimate governmental institutions to consolidate the peace and foster human development. Crises, whether man-made or natural, generally lead to a breakdown of State institutions. Reforming those institutions is undoubtedly a complex and demanding task. Our experience in addressing the practical challenges in establishing transitional governance structures, providing security, delivering public services and addressing questions of transitional justice speaks eloquently to our ability to overcome those hurdles.

The journey along the thorny path of advancing national reconciliation and central Government control over the entire country, including our post-conflict governance and institutional capacity-building programmes, would not have been possible without engagement with our multilateral and bilateral partners and national and international non-governmental organizations. The role of partners, such as the United Nations and its specialized agencies, the African Union (AU), the European Commission, the Commonwealth, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and our many bilateral partners — notably the bold leadership, logistical and financial resources provided by the United Kingdom, Nigeria and others, has been crucial in nurturing the condition for lasting peace and reconciliation in Sierra Leone. Some of the feasible outcomes that have emerged from those collaborations included the successful implementation of programmes such as the DDR, the reform of the justice and security sectors and the capacity-building and development of the governance and transitional justice mechanisms.

The learning curve in Sierra Leone's post-conflict stabilization has, no doubt, contributed immeasurably to the knowledge base in United Nations peacekeeping operations. There is no denying that, without the requisite levels of funding, leadership and human capital, post-conflict societies cannot easily escape from a relapse into renewed violence. In the face of extensive devastation of infrastructures and the mass exodus of skilled human resource capacities in disaster or conflict-prone societies, those countries could only reverse the trend to pre-crisis levels with coherent, sustained and coordinated partnerships with the international community.

In our view, the Government of the United Kingdom is not advancing an entirely new phenomenon, but rather giving context to the value that the now defunct programmes, such as the Volunteer Service Overseas, Canadian University Students Overseas and the Peace Corps among others, added to capacity-building and development in beneficiary host countries. This, for us, is a wake-up call for the international community to step up efforts to promote post-conflict stabilization. We do not always need to wait for situations to deteriorate before flying tens of thousands of blue helmets and green berets to extinguish volcanoes. Investing in peace and stability makes our work easier and saves lives and billions of dollars.

The foundation for the enhancement of State capacities for war-to-peace transitions for development lies primarily in coherent and sustained partnerships and cooperation among the various actors in peacebuilding. The Peacebuilding Commission was established in tandem with this notion in 2005 in order to sustain international attention on countries emerging from conflict and to assist in addressing critical gaps in their recovery process. Similarly, despite inherent challenges in funding, regional and subregional organizations, such as the AU and ECOWAS, have also established peacebuilding support mechanisms aimed at complementing external intervention in order to bring their comparative advantage on knowledge of the local realities to bear on peacebuilding work. Being a pioneer on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, Sierra Leone welcomes the United Kingdom's recent announcement to set-up a pool of rapidly deployable and skilled civilian personnel in this regard.

Underpinning all these initiatives and engagements is the need for coordination among the plethora of international actors involved in post-conflict operations. This brings the centrality of the leadership role of the United Nations into focus, particularly at the field level, to effectively manage the rhythm of war-to-peace transition, in a balanced and coordinated manner, fully nurturing the capacities of local actors to take on their responsibilities. In Sierra Leone, that leadership was found in the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL) under the directive of the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General following the phasing out of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone. Thus, a robust and strengthened representation of the Secretary-General in post-conflict situations is crucial for the success of their operations and the long-term stabilization and sustainable development of those societies.

As a demonstration of our faith in this debate as a wake-up call for the international community to step up the efforts that are essential for promoting post-conflict stabilization, let me make the following observations for further reflection.

First, as in every partnership and cooperation, external intervention to promote and strengthen war-to-peace stabilization processes is not entirely devoid of tensions and dilemmas. Even with the best of intentions, international involvement in providing security, designing transitional governance structures, economic reforms and the delivery of public services and identifying local interlocutors, among others, often comes under the scrutiny of undermining the cardinal principle of national ownership and long-term sustainability.

Secondly, another potential area of tensions lies in the size, scope and assertiveness of external players in the discharge of their mandate and tasks, especially where reform measures conflict with traditional norms and sensitivities in those early stages of conflict transformation and peacebuilding.

Thirdly, while external engagement of a sustained and effective kind remains highly desirable, adequate attention should also be paid to the need for local actors to be given ample space to determine policy options and decision-making in the pursuit of their goals and objectives.

In conclusion, it is our view that in the light of the capacity gap occasioned by the massive flight of badly needed skilled human resources in the wake of crisis situations, the civilian components of peacekeeping operation personnel are as significantly essential as their military counterparts. In fact, the situation becomes even more demanding in the peacebuilding phase so as to allow societies emerging from conflict to build and develop the capacities of their local actors to assume their role in lubricating the recovery process. It is therefore appropriate to call on the Peacebuilding Commission and multilateral and bilateral partners, including regional organizations, to assist in providing the requisite financial, logistical and technical support for the creation and empowerment of such a pool of civilian peace corps at both the international and the local levels and a base that is readily deployable as a military component and under effective leadership and coordination.

The President: I thank the Minister for that very interesting contribution. I look forward to the debate taking forward some of the questions that she has raised and the lessons that she has tried to teach us from the Sierra Leone experience.

I am now very happy to welcome the Senior Vice-President of the World Bank, Mr. Marwan Muasher, who is going to share his views with us.

Mr. Muasher (World Bank): The President of the World Bank, Mr. Robert Zoellick, is unable to be with us today and asked me to transmit his greetings and appreciation to you, Mr. President, for organizing this open debate and for inviting the World Bank.

I welcome the statement of the Secretary-General and wish to assure him of our commitment to work jointly with the United Nations system to meet together the challenges of post-conflict countries.

Over the past 15 years, the World Bank has considerably expanded its work on conflict and fragility, both operationally and analytically. With the broad support of our Board of Directors, the Bank focuses more on peacebuilding, State building, institutional reforms and partnerships. While our knowledge base for countries in post-conflict or on a gradual reform track is good, we still need to know more about how to achieve results in terms of conflict prevention and poverty reduction in countries facing deteriorating governance or a political impasse. Our partnership with the United Nations system will prove essential in order to refine our operational approach.

The Bank recently approved a new state-building and peacebuilding fund to address the needs of state and local governance and peacebuilding in fragile situations that offers the promise of high impact. It aims to complement the Peacebuilding Fund of the Peacebuilding Commission of the United Nations and other efforts.

On the analytical side, the Bank has commissioned applied research in areas such as conflict and development and natural resources and conflict, in collaboration with renowned research institutions. I am emphasizing here the importance of the contribution of research to our policy at the Bank and to the international discourse at large.

Overcoming the multifaceted problems of countries coming out of conflict or seeking to avoid the breakdown of the State is crucial to the Bank's development mission, its sustainability and effectiveness. As more countries graduate from the International Development Association, our concessional finance window, we expect an increasing share of our partner countries to be fragile and conflict-affected countries. The objectives and expected results we aim to achieve under that strategic theme fall into three broad areas.

First, we aim at promoting better global understanding. The World Bank aims to promote better global understanding of the dynamics that affect fragile situations and effective strategic and operational approaches to assisting them. An important starting point is to increase the consensus on international frameworks and priorities to approaches in those countries, including diplomatic, development, institution-building and security linkages.

Secondly, we aim at promoting improved country-level collaboration. On the country level, our goals include practical examples of successful international support to peacebuilding transitions, consolidation of governance reform, progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and private sector development, particularly with our private sector window, the International Finance Corporation.

Thirdly, we aim at delivering visible results through a coherent World Bank Group approach. Our goal is for a World Bank Group that is able to intervene quickly and effectively, drawing on an expanded field presence, while exercising flexibility in internal operating procedures and close work with external partners.

Against that background, I will now turn to the concept note prepared for this debate. I commend the United Kingdom for its succinctness.

With regard to leadership on the ground, we believe that the leadership of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General is critical and we look to their guidance, particularly in diplomatic and security areas. To that end, a Special Representative of the Secretary-General must enjoy the full support of the international community.

We strongly believe in supporting a country's institutions and systems as the best way to secure national ownership and render reconstruction sustainable. Concurrently, measures for accountability to citizens and for empowering all citizens need to be included.

Furthermore, we need to strengthen our measurement of results in fragile and post-conflict situations and scale up what works. To implement coordination, we view a government's multi-year budget as the preferred starting point. We acknowledge, however, that in the immediate post-conflict phase, capacities and instruments often do not exist. It may, thus, be necessary to put in place an alternative and temporary mechanism to deliver services and assistance.

The international community must also deliver a coherent message to post-conflict governments, based on a shared platform for post-conflict recovery planning and joint monitoring. For example, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a broad-based effort by the European Commission, United Nations agencies, the International Monetary Fund, the African Development Bank and the World Bank as well as main donor countries, including Belgium, France, the United Kingdom and the United States, was able to harmonize donor views for discussion with the new Government on government priorities for reforms.

The Peacebuilding Commission recently undertook a mission to Guinea-Bissau, in which the Bank participated. That mission assessed the current situation in the country and resulted in the establishment by the Government of a national steering committee that will elaborate a peacebuilding strategy and prioritize programmes for funding.

On civilian capacity, the Bank has just established a callable roster for rapid deployment and we will seek to link our callable capacity to that of our partners with a view to jointly mobilizing our rosters in crisis situations.

With regard to more rapid and flexible funding, when properly designed, large-scale post-conflict multi-donor trust funds can play a critical role during the reconstruction process, as we have seen with the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund and the Trust Fund for Timor-Leste, for instance. For the Bank-administered multi-donor trust fund for South Sudan, I am pleased that progress has been made and that, at the recent conference in Oslo, both the Government of South Sudan and donors confirmed that they saw the trust fund as an effective instrument, with donors making substantial new pledges to it.

However, we will have to deal with the tension emanating, for example, from the trade-off between ensuring fiduciary standards and showing quick results. That tension could hamper implementation. In that regard, we believe that the fiduciary principles accord that is currently being prepared by the United Nations Development Group and the Bank will significantly improve the administration of such trust funds and deliver results to the beneficiary population more rapidly.

In order to be strategic, large-scale post-conflict trust funds should be built upon post-conflict needs assessments, transitional results matrices and sector analysis. They do not always cater to the needs of the start-up phase, such as initial facilities needed by a new government, human vulnerability and emergency employment creation. A number of other funds, for instance the Peacebuilding Fund, can cover that phase without the need for a separate assessment. In that regard, we deem it important to move towards making the humanitarian and development appropriations more fungible in order to ensure a swift and appropriate international response to possibly rapidly changing needs on the ground.

We need to and we can leverage our cumulative experience better in order to make tangible progress on the ground. We are willing to work with our partners in the United Nations system and the international community to that end.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi.

Mr. Brahimi: I thank you very much, Sir, for inviting me to take part in today's debate.

Your concept paper for today's debate sets the problem very accurately and very clearly. When a peace agreement has been signed and a United Nations peacekeeping operation moves in, there are certain critical needs that must be swiftly addressed if we are to have a real chance of building a sustainable peace, and yet we continue to face many of the same challenges that existed a decade ago and more.

In the limited time available to me, I shall address only two issues: funding and civilian capacity. I shall do so briefly and draw exclusively on my past personal experience.

Looking back to Afghanistan in December 2001, the political challenges were great, but we had one important factor working in our favour — there was enormous international attention focused on the country and a strong commitment to making the peace process succeed. That, we knew, would bring us a lot of good will and political support. Most important, we also expected it to provide us with some cash. As I told the many observers present with us at the Bonn peace talks, we needed to arrive in Kabul with money in a bag — to take it with us — because we had to begin providing some peace dividends soon after our arrival.

However, while we had plenty of ideas, we had very little money to pay for them, and I must confess that what little cash we did have we did not always use wisely. For example, we needed to get the ministries up and running. So what did we do? We bought, for each minister, one car, one desk, one chair and one computer. That served only to embarrass the minister in front of his officials because, in his department, there were no desks and no chairs, windows were broken and there was no electricity and no heating. We next embarrassed ourselves when we invited Afghan ministers and other officials to the inauguration of the beautifully refurbished offices of one of our agencies. While Government offices still had no electricity, no heating and no water, that particular building of ours had been redone fast and to the highest international standards. Its transformation did not go unnoticed by the Afghan population.

In Afghanistan and elsewhere, United Nations officials are often asked how much of the funds donated to help these countries is actually spent by the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations on themselves and why. They do not understand why the funds pledged to them actually go into two very separate pots — one pot that was intended for the host country and a separate pot that would pay for refurbishing United Nations buildings, purchasing fleets of big white vehicles, and bringing lots of highly paid international staff.

As if to add insult to injury, while the pot that pays for refurbishing our own offices, running our generators and paying our own personnel fills up rather quickly, the other pot does not. In Afghanistan, while hundreds of millions were contributed to United Nations agencies in the early days, very little was available directly to the ministries and other national institutions. Besides, I am sure that everyone must have seen the recent Oxfam study that said that a staggering 40 per cent of the funds donated go back to donor countries in the form of salaries for expatriates and the like.

Thus, we had to resort to creative measures to establish a mechanism within the Government, with support from donors and the United Nations Development Programme, to ensure that the very modest salaries of all civil servants were paid. That was a real exploit that had to be repeated every month. Rebuilding roads, hospitals and schools had to wait. It needed even more ingenuity and the patient support of many dedicated and able ambassadors, including one now present in this Chamber, United States Ambassador Khalilzad.

Peacebuilding does not occur just by sending United Nations staff to a country and putting our flags in the ground. Funds are needed. The most complex operations, from Haiti to the Sudan, from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Afghanistan, have peacebuilding activities at the very core of their mandates, ranging from police reform and the strengthening of judicial institutions to elections and the refurbishment of prisons, yet they have no allocations in their budgets for those activities. That creates a huge gap at a time when the greatest risk exists of relapse into conflict.

United Nations trust funds have been established in a few missions to make funding available from voluntary contributions. However, 13 per cent of the contributions have to be paid to the United Nations for what are called programme support costs. Nobody has been able to explain to me why such a staggering tax is imposed on those trust funds. It is, fortunately, possible to negotiate a substantial reduction of that tax, but it takes months to bring such negotiations to a fruitful end. It is no wonder that many donors balk at contributing to those trust funds. In addition, missions complain about the cumbersome procedures for accessing funds. As a result, after all these years and struggles, we are still unable to use the trust funds effectively.

I now come to the issue of civilian capacity. You will recall, Sir, that we tried to approach our mandate in Afghanistan with what we called a light footprint. That concept is really very simple. We should have as many international staff as we need to get the job done, but not one single staff member more than that. Our goal in the mission, individually and collectively, should be from the outset to work ourselves out of a job. We should not suddenly realize, as our mandate is coming to a close, that we have overlooked the need to build national capacity. That is one area in which I believe we continue to do rather poorly.

First, we assume that each country we enter has little or no capacity of its own. Perhaps that is because we do not look hard enough. In Afghanistan, which had been ravaged by 23 years of war, we met countless Afghans with skills that the United Nations could have used. If we had made it a priority at the outset of the mission to recruit Afghans, we could have hired many of them to serve in all parts of the Administration, in Kabul as well as in the provinces, and a very large number of positions within the United Nations mission and agencies might have been filled by locals. Even if we could not find the expertise we needed in the country, there was an Afghan diaspora — at least 5 million-strong — most of which was across the border in Pakistan and Iran.

The second issue is the size of our missions and the fact that we are never able to recruit our authorized staff in a timely manner. We then attribute many of the mission's failures to the shortfall in staff. Some suggestions have been put on the table, such as having national Governments assist with developing civilian cadres and rosters of rapidly deployable civilians. Those are worthwhile suggestions and they must be explored. I personally believe that the real need is in the field of the rule of law and my favourite option would be for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations itself to be enabled to establish its own roster of retired policemen, judges and so on. I know for a fact that in many countries large and small, in the North and in the South alike, such capacity does exist and awaits to be mobilized, but perhaps those difficulties in identifying experts, along with the lack of programmatic funds for peacekeeping operations, offer a good opportunity to the Council to re-examine its own approach to peacekeeping mandates.

I have the impression that one of the key recommendations contained in the 2000 report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (S/2000/809) is not always fully taken into consideration when peacekeeping mandates are discussed. That is the recommendation that the Council should give the United Nations achievable mandates and ensure that the mission is provided with all the resources — staff, funds and equipment — that are necessary to do the job. We must also ask whether the United Nations, given its conditions of service, will ever attract qualified staff in sufficient numbers. And we must ask whether we will continue to have difficulty persuading qualified individuals, especially women, to work in non-family duty stations.

Perhaps more important, we must avoid putting together "template" missions that set out complex and ambitious tasks for imagined armies of expert civilians who are to carry out the same laundry list of tasks in dramatically different post-conflict settings. It would pay out handsomely for us to take the time to look at the capacity that exists in-country and to see how the United Nations could partner with domestic institutions, rather than setting up our own heavy and costly structures.

To state the obvious once again, mandates must be based on the actual — not the perceived — needs of any given country. We cannot fully understand those needs until we have been present for a while, engaged in a dialogue with leaders and civil society, and until we have, together with them, formed a clear understanding of what is really needed. I believe that such an approach would move us towards much smaller, more focused missions.

At the same time, leaders of peacekeeping missions should not forget that other United Nations entities have preceded them in the country where they themselves have just arrived; those entities may even have been working there for years and years, perhaps decades. The new mission must endeavour to complement — not duplicate or replace — the work of the United Nations agencies already there. Allow me to insist on the importance of the light-footprint approach and on the necessity of systematically exploring the possibility of using local capacity as early and as extensively as possible. Others are doing this; why not the United Nations?

The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan is a non-governmental organization that has been active in Afghanistan since the early 1980s. It is funded by the Government and the people of Sweden, and it now employs 8,000 Afghans, including doctors, teachers and engineers. Yet it does not count more than 15 internationals among its staff. The United Nations itself runs very important and successful demining activities, with 7,000 to 8,000 Afghans and only around 20 internationals.

I often say that, if I could return to Afghanistan in the year 2001, one of the things I would do differently would be to place priority on strengthening the rule of law. What do I mean by that? Do I mean that we should have had more foreign experts focusing on rule-of-law issues, drafting laws and training judges? No; what we needed was better and more effective use of our political leverage on that issue. We should have played a stronger and a more proactive political facilitation role in uniting the various national actors behind a common vision and a national plan for strengthening the rule of law in the country.

In that connection, I am pleased to see that the Secretary-General has just issued a new guidance note on a common United Nations approach to the rule of law, which highlights that the role of the United Nations is to facilitate the processes through which various national stakeholders debate and outline the elements of their countries' plans to strengthen the rule of law and secure sustainable justice, and that the aim of United Nations rule-of-law assistance is to help those national stakeholders to develop their own visions, agendas and approaches to reform and programmes.

Process, leadership and decision-making must be put in the hands of national stakeholders as early as possible. The Secretary-General correctly states that rule-of-law assistance has often overemphasized technical dimensions and paid less attention to political and strategic considerations and that, until national stakeholders see the utility of supporting rule-of-law development, technical assistance will have little impact.

The Council does not need to be reminded of the importance of the role that the United Nations plays in helping countries to manage and resolve their conflicts and to rebuild their national institutions and economies. Precious experience has been gained over the years, and United Nations missions perform better today than they did a few years ago. But we must not be complacent. Quite a few missions are struggling to find the right balance between the goals set for them and the resources that they have been able to obtain. In particular, funding and civilian capacity are two of the important gaps that need to be addressed most urgently. The manner in which the Council discusses and decides on peacekeeping mandates may contribute significantly to the solution of these problems.

The international community spends billions every year on peacekeeping. It is clearly not good enough that, in some cases, we have entered host countries to the sound of the population's cheers, only to bow our heads in disbelief and embarrassment in the face of that same population's disappointment, anger and even hostility a few months later because we have been unable to deliver tangible peace dividends. However, this is not inevitable; we can and should do much better.

The President: I very much thank Mr. Brahimi for having drawn on his experience so frankly to challenge the Council to take seriously its words about national ownership and local solutions.

Speakers have referred to the succinctness and shortness of the United Kingdom's concept paper, and it falls to me to ask that speakers be equally short and succinct in their contributions to this debate. In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I must remind speakers that their contributions to the debate should be no longer than five minutes. Delegations with longer statements are kindly requested to distribute the texts in writing and to limit their spoken remarks to five minutes only. We have 20 speakers to hear before lunch and an additional 35 speakers after lunch, so we need to make progress.

I now invite His Excellency Mr. Gordan Jandroković, Minister for Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Croatia, who has just arrived from his country, to take the floor.

Mr. Jandroković (Croatia): At the outset, I wish to express Croatia's deepest condolences to China and Myanmar on their tragic losses.

My country has aligned itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of the Republic of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union. Nevertheless, I would like to make several remarks on today's important topic.

First of all, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for choosing the topic of post-conflict peacebuilding for the thematic debate under the United Kingdom presidency of the Security Council. That topic is timely and, above all, exceedingly relevant in today's world — a world in which we are witnesses to situations where far too many conflicts that end through negotiated settlements restart within five years. Moreover, we are witnesses to many conflict areas in which the situation does not permit national Governments to assume their responsibility to ensure the security and well-being of their people, and therefore unnecessarily prolongs a sometimes seemingly endless international military or other presence.

Why is that so? The answer, when found, will almost inevitably be very complex, if not at times almost elusive — not unlike the actual situations in post-conflict areas themselves. Some of the possible reasons for this can be found in the concept paper for today's deliberations (S/2008/291, annex), which, in our view, provides a good starting point for our discussion. To be sure, the rapid implementation of a peace agreement is very important, but we have to ensure that this does not occur in a vacuum. The whole of a society that emerges from conflict has to feel the peace dividends of emergence from a conflict, which take the form of stability, security and improvements in daily life. We agree completely with those assessments.

Additionally, we believe that it is important to involve domestic resources, wherever possible and without exacerbating existing political tensions. An operation of post-conflict stabilization can most certainly benefit from this kind of engagement. The utilization of domestic resources certainly enhances the effectiveness of an operation and makes use of the available experience and skills of the people in the country emerging from conflict, who more often than not can provide a unique perspective not otherwise available to outsiders.

Another added value of this approach is being able to develop autonomous capacity that is necessary for the consolidation of those national structures that will eventually need to take over responsibility for governing the country. Also worth mentioning is the positive effect that the international community working together with national structures can have on the overall better acceptance of a peacebuilding mission by the local population.

Our own experience during the war imposed on Croatia in the 1990s, when United Nations peacekeepers, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Health Organization, as well as many other agencies and humanitarian assistance organizations, were present in the area, leads us to conclude that all these agencies may have come with the best of intentions, but that in many cases they were not able to understand the real needs of the population or to cooperate effectively with each other or with the people involved. The ultimate result of this was that much of the overall spending of the United Nations and other agencies in Croatia during that time went into maintaining themselves and their own programmes and goals, and did not end up with the people or institutions that required their assistance.

It is, of course, not my intention to disparage the presence of United Nations and other humanitarian organizations in Croatia during those difficult times. We are most certainly very grateful for the help and assistance we received, and indeed some significant results were produced, including one of the most successful United Nations missions overall — the United Nations Transitional Administration in Eastern

Slavonia. My comments are aimed solely at providing examples of how we can always learn from and improve our activities.

The establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission is one of the most important results of United Nations reform thus far. Croatia was very active in its founding, and was also elected as a member in its inaugural year of existence, including as a member of the country-specific meeting on Burundi. We value and support the work of the Commission, especially through its integrated peacebuilding strategies. What we need to do now is ensure that those strategies are implemented on the ground in the most efficient manner.

Croatia is of the opinion that the peacebuilding concept enacted through the Peacebuilding Commission offers the best way in which we can effectively achieve as well as consolidate the three main pillars of the United Nations: security, development and the protection of human rights. Achieving and consolidating security creates the conditions necessary for development and therefore also strengthens the tools required for protecting and enhancing human rights. Implementing the three main pillars together leads to creating sustainable peace and long-lasting stability and prosperity.

We are aware that the chances for substantive peace are enhanced with the speedy and coordinated engagement of the United Nations system following the establishment of a ceasefire on the ground or the signing of a peace agreement. As there are many United Nations agencies that can be involved in post-conflict situations, it is imperative that their efforts be coordinated and integrated so that the capabilities of all these United Nations and other agencies can be utilized to capacity while simultaneously reducing overlap. In doing so, costs can most certainly be reduced and more resources can be allocated to address the core needs of the country involved.

A good example of utilizing a coordinated and integrated approach is the report of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence, entitled "Delivering as one" (see A/61/583), which we fully support. That report envisages the role of an empowered Resident Coordinator as the leader of integrated United Nations efforts in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment. Post-conflict peacebuilding efforts and leadership on the ground should follow a similar pattern.

We also believe that the plans and organization of the core structure of integrated post-conflict stabilization efforts should be permanently placed on standby so that preparations for a specific operation will take the minimum amount of time and will include only country-specific details. Several questions in this regard have been posed in the concept paper for today's discussion (S/2008/291, annex). When looking at the different types of civilian experts that are required for a post-conflict peacebuilding mission, especially in the areas of justice, corrections, security sector reform, governance and economic recovery, we believe that the formation of rosters, as was suggested in the Brahimi report on peacekeeping (S/2000/809), is a good way forward. The existence of permanent rosters of civilian experts that are ready to be deployed on short notice would significantly shorten preparation periods and enable the civilian effort in post-conflict stabilization to be deployed immediately after a ceasefire or peace agreement has been reached. In that respect, my Government is ready to make its contribution in the form of civilian experts who themselves have gained experience and expertise during the post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction period in Croatia.

All the activities that we are talking about today are obviously not possible without sufficient funding. Therefore, we must do our utmost to ensure sustainable and transparent financing. For its part, Croatia is one of the founders of the Peacebuilding Fund, whose work it supports and contributes to.

My delegation hopes that today's discussion will result in the establishment of concrete steps towards strengthening both United Nations and international capabilities in the field of post-conflict peacebuilding. We are looking forward to the Secretary-General's advice on this matter, and are of the opinion that the Council should revisit this issue in a timely manner.

The President: I am now delighted to give the floor to His Excellency Mosiuoa Gerard Patrick Lekota, Minister of Defence of South Africa.

Mr. Lekota (South Africa): Allow me to begin by thanking the delegation of the United Kingdom for organizing today's debate. South Africa aligns itself with the statement to be made later by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

In December 2005, the General Assembly and the Security Council concurrently established the Peacebuilding Commission as a new intergovernmental advisory body of the United Nations to support peace efforts in countries emerging from conflict.

Today's debate should be seen as another opportunity to support and enhance existing mechanism of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, thus re-energizing peacebuilding efforts in post-conflict countries. It is important that the Peacebuilding Commission be strengthened and remain the focal point of peacebuilding activities. Right now, the main challenge facing the Commission is to maximize its impact on the ground in full alignment, cooperation and accord with national Governments' policies and strategies.

The priorities in the post-conflict environment should centre around the four basic pillars of post-conflict reconstruction, namely, security, social and economic well-being, justice and reconciliation, good governance and participation. Post-conflict societies are confronted with various problems, including the absence of, or weak, institutions, and limited or no capacity necessary for the long-term sustainability of peace and socio-economic development.

Even more important is ensuring national and local ownership in the identification, development and recommendation of national priorities and strategies. Without national ownership of peacebuilding, any intervention will likely be regarded as an imposition. And, as history has taught us, imposed solutions are soon disregarded by their very beneficiaries and are bound to fail dismally.

The issue of deploying civilian experts with a view to addressing these capacity gaps in a country's post-conflict and stabilization periods is worth scrutinizing closely. South Africa's experience in African peace missions, such as in Burundi, show that some of the civilian expertise is invaluable. In principle, we therefore support the concept of integrated peace missions, within the confines of various mandates. We hope there will be ongoing and detailed discussions on how this concept could be applied, including on the role of the United Nations, regional organizations and member States.

Our limited experience since we joined in the efforts of the international community in seeking to stabilize parts of the continent and other places indicates to us that regional buy-in is critical for the success of any peace mission. We realize now from what we have experienced that merged or balanced participation by countries of the region in which the conflict is taking place is vital, because those countries have partial but direct interest in the success or otherwise of the peace mission. It is no exaggeration to say that sometimes human commitment to a process could indeed be more important than billions of dollars being thrown at a problem. Human beings can make things happen even, at times, without money.

It is our view that for post-conflict reconstruction to succeed its processes should be seen as reinforcing the attainment of peace, stability and security. In effect, both national and regional participation must be part of the effort right from the beginning, so that those in the country and in the region feel that they own the entire process. Sustainability beyond settlement requires the will power of the country and of the countries surrounding it.

On a practical level, this would mean that post-conflict reconstruction practitioners and resources are deployed alongside peacekeepers. However, we are cognizant of the challenges associated with the deployment of civilian capacities, including issues of security.

Among other challenges the United Kingdom delegation raised in its concept paper is the financing gap in the aftermath of conflict. One of the pillars of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture is the Peacebuilding Fund. The Fund was created for the specific purpose of assisting in the facilitation of peacebuilding activities and is understood to be a catalyst for attracting much-needed financial resource injections, particularly at a time when there may be little hope of success towards recovery. The role of the Fund is critical, because for peace to have a chance, the material conditions of a society must change and people's hopes for a better life must be sustained. Quick-impact projects must be implemented so as to demonstrate peace dividends to fragile populations and communities.

The resources of the United Nations and other multinational organizations often move much slower than required, as a consequence of which golden opportunities for success are sometimes missed. We have found ourselves compelled at times to approach some partners to ask them for direct bilateral assistance so that we do not lose opportunities that are there. In that regard, I must mention the Netherlands, Belgium and the United Kingdom, which have sometimes assisted and have made it possible for us to sustain the processes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The African Union continues to play its role in the peacebuilding field, including through its post-conflict reconstruction and development policy. South Africa is privileged to have been selected to chair the first African Union ministerial committee focusing on post-conflict reconstruction and development in the Sudan.

In conclusion, we appreciate the efforts of the United Kingdom presidency to lead us on these cross-cutting issues of peace, security and development, and we support the draft presidential statement to be adopted later.

The President: I thank the representative of South Africa for his very focused and helpful contribution.

I am now happy to invite His Excellency Mr. Olivier Chastel, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium, to take the floor.

Mr. Chastel (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I too wish to extend heartfelt condolences to China and Myanmar.

I thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this debate on post-conflict peacebuilding. Belgium associates itself with the statement to be made by the representative of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union.

The concept paper before us (S/2008/291, annex) poses some fundamental questions, such as how to ensure sustainable post-conflict stability and how to avoid a relapse into conflict following a peace agreement. The international community is still struggling to meet those challenges. Clearly, it is not for the Security Council alone to find the answers to these questions. The General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission and other United Nations bodies can also enrich this process of reflection.

My statement will focus on the following areas: the contribution of international civilian experts; the provision of flexible financial resources; partnerships between beneficiary States and the international community; and coordination within the international community.

The evolution of peacekeeping operations in recent years has been an initial response to these concerns. For some time, they have been more than just military operations; they have become multidisciplinary, and they contribute to the protection of human rights, to transitional justice, to training police and security forces, and to State capacity-building. Yet we must note that it remains difficult, following a peace agreement, speedily to dispatch adequate numbers of civilian experts who specialize in these spheres to the area in question. But that is the very kind of technical assistance that can make the difference in sustainable peacebuilding, by helping the country to rebuild its State structures.

Many countries are not in a position to dispatch civilian experts in a rapid and flexible manner, either because of administrative obstacles or because, quite simply, such experts are unavailable. We might consider, for example, establishing a pool of international experts for immediate deployment. That could, moreover, be done in cooperation with regional organizations. Belgium would favour the Secretary-General studying this question and making recommendations.

Last week's Security Council debate (see S/PV.5889) highlighted the importance of security sector reform for lasting peace, and I shall therefore not dwell on that key element.

Another major problem is the lack of financing instruments that would make it possible to respond flexibly enough to emergencies and to the most urgent needs in a post-conflict situation — or at least the lack of sufficient coherence among existing ones. The Brahimi report (S/2000/809) had already recommended that a certain percentage of peacekeeping mission funds should be applied to quick-impact projects. The goal here is for the population to immediately enjoy the benefits of peace. Quick-impact projects add real value, and we should consider the possibility of rapidly mobilizing financial resources to help national authorities carry out such projects. In that context, we should look at financial resources and instruments that can be mobilized as speedily as possible to benefit a post-conflict country, and should consider how to operationalize them in a coordinated way. Such thinking is also under way in the Peacebuilding Commission.

The provision of civilian experts and flexible financial assistance are necessary elements during the phase of stabilization. But they are not enough. The political commitment of the country's leaders must also be reflected in effective operational cooperation with the international community. In that context, we must bear in mind the realities and obstacles in the field. Often, national authorities are unable to meet the many challenges of a crisis — not for any lack of political will but rather because of a lack of capacity and resources. For that reason, we should consider partnerships with such authorities in order to speedily identify needs and properly respond to them together.

Better cooperation within the international community is also needed, along with earlier planning for possible intervention on the ground. From the very outset, the Security Council should better integrate the building of partnerships and the initiation of peacebuilding into its mandates, in particular when these involve supervising and supporting the implementation of peace agreements.

Establishing or rebuilding the rule of law in a country affected by conflict is by definition a long-term undertaking. We have no illusions in that regard: there are no miracle solutions. However, the Security Council should consider new ways to set the foundations for lasting peace.

The President: I am now delighted to invite His Excellency Mr. Imron Cotan, Secretary-General of the Department of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, to take the floor.

Mr. Cotan (Indonesia): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, for convening this thematic debate. Let me assure you of our utmost support for your stewardship in ensuring a productive outcome to this debate. I should also like to extend to you the personal greetings of Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda. I very much enjoyed your conversation with him on Myanmar a few days ago.

As did the Minster of Defence of South Africa, my delegation would also like to associate itself with the statement to be made later by the representative of Jamaica, who will speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Since its introduction, in 1992, the concept of post-conflict peacebuilding has evolved and entered into the mainstream of various peace initiatives. It is now an integral part of the efforts by the international community to bring durable peace to countries emerging from conflict. In a world where wars, famine and destruction are acutely prevalent, post-conflict peacebuilding is a commendable effort that deserves our utmost support. Many countries that are on the agenda of the Security Council have benefited from such efforts. Post-conflict peacebuilding has been instrumental in ensuring that peace becomes sustainable in those countries.

Moreover, with the increasing significance of post-conflict peacebuilding efforts, there are currently high expectations to facilitate the expeditious graduation of current United Nations peacekeeping operations towards the post-conflict peacebuilding phase. That is an important phase not only for the country concerned but also for the Council, so that it can focus its work on more pressing issues, such as solving conflict and building peace in the Middle East, where violence long ago became a daily occurrence. It is indeed a tragedy that indiscriminate killings continue unabated in that part of the world.

While we underline the importance of post-conflict peacebuilding, we are nevertheless of the view that such an effort cannot be perpetual. It must have its exit and it must eventually strengthen the independence and self-reliance of countries where post-conflict peacebuilding missions are deployed. With regard to the role of countries that are recipients of post-conflict peacebuilding efforts, my delegation attaches primary importance to national leadership and ownership of endeavours. They must actively be involved in every step of the post-conflict peacebuilding process. Since post-conflict peacebuilding is a multifaceted process, we believe that it needs to be guided by a hierarchy of priorities established in response to the specific needs and political dynamics in the given recipient countries.

Post-conflict peacebuilding plays a critical role in guiding countries in the fragile post-conflict phase out of an environment of conflict and into a more stable state. While its significance cannot be questioned, much remains to be done in order to improve its effectiveness. Rapid deployment is as important with regard to post-conflict peacebuilding as it is in peacekeeping operations.

The United Nations has deployed various peacekeeping operations with large numbers of troops in different countries with some degree of success. As indicated by the Secretary-General in his remarks, that has to be supported by civilian experts, including development specialists, judges, administrators and other relevant professionals. As the United Nations is currently over-stretched in terms of personnel available for peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions, enhancing and broadening the scope of international cooperation becomes critical. However, the challenge to international collaboration is how to provide a sizeable, swift and coordinated response to the demands of post-conflict peacebuilding.

That brings me to the issue of funding, which is another critical element for successful post-conflict peacebuilding. All funding avenues must be explored and utilized. As helpful as they are, multi-donor trust funds cannot be the foundation for normal socio-economic activity, which requires self-sustaining avenues. The trap of debt and overly tight fiscal policies imposed by international institutions should also be avoided. Therefore, more efforts can and should be made to engage non-governmental resources and the private sector to fill the gaps.

We would like to underscore the central role of the Peacebuilding Commission with regard to post-conflict peacebuilding within the United Nations system. Now in its third year, the Peacebuilding Commission is beginning to find its niche and demonstrate its added value. It has been able to create linkages between political/security and financial/development actors and has maintained medium-term political attention on countries emerging from conflict.

Again, as has been eloquently explained by previous speakers, given the existence of so many competing institutions and resources, coordination is a major issue to be dealt with. We recognize the role that the Security Council can play in enhancing adequate coordination and division of labour at the level of United Nations organs. In our view, the Council can ensure the operational relevance of the advice of the Peacebuilding Commission, which remains essential for countries on the agenda of both bodies and for resolving the security-related aspects of peacebuilding.

Equally essential is the synergy between the Peacebuilding Commission, the General Assembly — including the Fifth Committee and the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations — and the Economic and Social Council. It is particularly important to bridge the issues of peacebuilding, political stability, socio-economic recovery and humanitarian concerns, which could lay the foundations for longer-term development activities.

As stated by the Secretary-General in his remarks today, his Special Representatives play important roles in peace processes. They can play a coordinating role working with all relevant players in the overall efforts of the United Nations in a given country. They can also become focal points, both from a negotiation and mediation standpoint as well as from the administrative, financial and logistical ones.

Finally, my delegation would like to reaffirm our support for international efforts at post-conflict peacebuilding. We also reiterate our emphasis on the central role of the Peacebuilding Commission in providing the United Nations with policy guidance and strategies in its post-conflict peacebuilding activities.

The President: I now give the floor to Her Excellency Mrs. Rama Yade, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Human Rights of France.

Mrs. Yade (France) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of France, I would of course like to join my colleagues in expressing to China and Myanmar our sadness at the humanitarian catastrophes they are currently experiencing.

Turning to our meeting today, I should like to warmly thank Mr. Miliband and the United Kingdom for presiding over the Council today and for having taken the initiative to organize this public debate on post-conflict peacebuilding. Post-conflict peacebuilding is today at the centre of the international community's concerns, and especially those of the Security Council.

During the crucial post-conflict stage, it behooves the international community to support still-precarious national institutions and enable them to meet the basic needs of the population. Of course the holding of elections is often a crucial and necessary stage for a country's return to peace, stability and democracy. Let us acknowledge, however, that that is not sufficient in itself. Unfortunately, we have before us some very worrying examples, whether in Timor-Leste or Haiti.

So what answers can we propose to meet those new challenges?

We must work to strengthen the international abilities of the United Nations to act during every stage of a crisis, from the threat of conflict through to reconstruction via peacekeeping and stabilization. That is a vision and a commitment that we share with the United Kingdom, as was reiterated by the President of the Republic and Prime Minister Gordon Brown during the Franco-British summit on 27 March. To that end we wish to act along four axes, without prejudice to the positions of the European Union (EU), which will soon be set out in the statement by Slovenia, with which France is in complete solidarity.

First, we have to strengthen the cohesiveness of the international community's interventions in post-conflict phases by integrating its various dimensions — political, security, humanitarian and development. In Afghanistan, for example, the entire international community is convinced of the need to implement a comprehensive civilian and military strategy. That is the thrust of resolution 1806 (2008), which has entrusted the Secretary-General's new Special Representative with a mission of coordinating the international community's effort, which includes these two aspects.

The Peacebuilding Commission is the first effort to improve the cohesiveness of the international community's actions. We believe that improvement of the Commission's working methods is desirable to enable it to meet that objective.

Secondly, we must also step up our actions in certain essential aspects of stabilization. Among the major issues — promoting the rule of law, setting up an effective and independent justice system and developing good governance — security sector reform is an indispensable, often crucial stage. United Nations endeavours in this field must be encouraged. The Security Council did so on 12 May (*see S/PV.5889 and S/PV.5890*). I wish to renew France's support for the Secretary-General's work in defining the Organization's approach to security sector reform.

I also wish to underscore the importance of combating impunity, which is the main condition for a genuine reconciliation, without which no lasting peace or development is possible. France was a sponsor of resolution 1593 (2005), which referred the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court. It was also a French expert who elaborated the main United Nations guidelines for the fight against impunity. Therefore it is natural for us to support the national processes begun in Burundi, Mauritania and Togo in that sense. We will continue to resolutely support the action of international criminal justice — especially the International Criminal Court, whose rulings must be carried out.

The third axis — one which is close to my heart — is the promotion of and respect for human rights in societies emerging from crisis. There can be no long-term peace, no long-term security or no long-term development if civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights, are trampled underfoot. How can a State hope to engage in reconstruction without harnessing the energy, inventiveness and spirit of enterprise of its people, without guaranteeing freedom of expression and assembly, which would enable them to fully express their potential?

How can we hope to rebuild a stable and democratic society if the right to education, whether universal primary education or access to education for women, is not respected? How can one rebuild a society whose productive forces have been decimated by pandemics, or where women are marginalized?

That is why France cherishes the hope of seeing regulated and equitable globalization, and why we fight the scourge of child soldiers. It is why France has set up a forum to follow up the Paris Commitments to facilitate the financing of programmes for the social reinsertion of former child soldiers. We should have a long-term commitment in that regard. It is why it is also indispensable to strengthen the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, in all its aspects. We must do that both to combat sexual violence and the impunity that too many perpetrators of those unbearable acts still enjoy, and to guarantee the role of women in any peace or reconstruction process.

Finally, France intends to back United Nations action in the field of post-conflict stabilization by mobilizing the capacities of the European Union. Generally speaking, we support the development of the potential of regional organizations, including the African Union, in security questions. We especially wish to develop cooperation between the EU and the United Nations in those areas. The EU has a broad set of instruments and expertise that can be made available to the United Nations. That is true of missions of the

European Security and Defence Policy in the fields of security sector reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Guinea-Bissau, the rule of law in Iraq or Georgia, or police in Afghanistan and Bosnia.

The development of partnership between the United Nations and the EU on security issues in the broad sense will thus be a priority of the French presidency of the EU, and we intend to work on that.

Mr. Tiendrébéogo (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): We too wish to convey our deep condolences to China and Myanmar for the humanitarian catastrophes with which they are dealing.

I thank you, Mr. President, for the initiative of organizing this Council debate on peacebuilding and post-conflict stabilization, an issue that Burkina Faso pays particular attention to.

My delegation endorses the statement to be made by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Countries emerging from conflict face numerous challenges, such as the destabilization of their economies, the collapse of security services and the defence forces, dysfunctional public administration and judicial systems, and more. All that places them in a very precarious situation. The current examples of Burundi, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau and many other countries are illustrative in that regard.

Therefore it is urgent to help those countries emerge from that transitional period with an appropriate peacebuilding programme, which the Secretary-General, in his 1998 report entitled "The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa", has already described as "actions undertaken at the end of a conflict to consolidate peace and prevent a recurrence of armed confrontation" (*S/1998/318, para. 63*).

For my delegation, any consideration of post-conflict stabilization must recognize the essential role played by the Peacebuilding Commission. With regard to the Commission's activities, it seems to us that, while significant actions have been undertaken and partial results obtained — in particular in Burundi and Sierra Leone and soon, we hope, in Guinea-Bissau — the road still ahead of us is a long and difficult one. The Commission must redouble its efforts to mobilize partners and take adequate steps so that the priorities it has identified are matched to those of the Peacebuilding Fund. That implies close cooperation between those two structures, which have complementary mandates, as well as a clear understanding on the part of each of its particular role.

As a financing organ, the Peacebuilding Fund is better equipped for designing or evaluating projects submitted to it. The Commission, more political in nature, should coordinate the efforts of all stakeholders, launch a constructive dialogue with all national actors, promote in all circumstances national ownership of the process, and make recommendations and suggest integrated peacebuilding strategies in accordance with the spirit and the letter of resolution 1645 (2005).

In addition to the contribution made by the Commission, we recognize that United Nations integrated missions, even if they have not wholly achieved the expected results, have made a significant contribution in the area of peacekeeping and peacebuilding in the immediate post-conflict period. Now, the issue of the deployment of multidisciplinary units of civilian experts should be accorded higher priority as well as the deployment of police advisers.

Given the need for significant resources during this crucial phase, international financial institutions also must play an important role, working together with the United Nations system.

These efforts should dovetail with those of subregional and regional institutions, which, given their proximity and their unique understanding of the socio-economic and cultural problems of the countries of their regions, are better able to mobilize efforts at the subregional level and to help strengthen bilateral relations between countries emerging from conflict and other States.

Thus, the Economic Community of West African States, for example, is playing an active role in the reconstruction of Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone. Similarly, numerous countries of the subregion are participating bilaterally in peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts in these countries. Therefore, the United Nations must work closely with the subregional institutions — in a spirit of partnership, of course.

With regard to the priority sectors in the context of post-conflict reconstruction and a return to lasting peace, my delegation believes that equal emphasis should be placed on strengthening the rule of law, administrative reform, the thorny issue of debt and the relaunching of economic activity.

To conclude, we would like to underscore the fact that all of these processes must be carried out in the framework of a partnership with local authorities in order to promote national ownership. We also wish to underscore the need to involve all components of society, in particular women, in post-conflict reconstruction.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation, who, I am sure, will give us a good example of brevity.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The high level of representation at this meeting attests to the importance of the issue of peacebuilding in countries emerging from conflict as well as the importance of formulating practical recommendations on improving the United Nations system's activities on the ground and coordination between the system and other participants in peacebuilding processes.

We share the view that assistance by the United Nations and other partners in post-conflict reconstruction early in the revival of countries that have experienced through hot periods of crisis is fraught with many difficulties in terms of coordination and complementarity of efforts, financing and national capacity-building of beneficiary States. We believe that peacebuilding activities must be based on the principle of national responsibility for determining priorities and approaches to their implementation. Assistance by the United Nations or other international partners should be implemented with the agreement of national Governments and with respect for the principle of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, as well as bearing in mind the specificities of the country in question.

The modalities for United Nations post-conflict assistance, whether in the form of peacekeeping operations, special political missions or joint United Nations peacebuilding presences, must be determined with the agreement of the host Government and must include a rational division of labour among regional organizations, international financial institutions and bilateral partners.

We believe that the Peacebuilding Commission has an important role to play in coordinating peacebuilding efforts in post-conflict States. The Commission's work to date shows the difficulties that arise when putting into practice the concept of combining within one structure all interested players, including international financial institutions, regional organizations, the donor community, civil society and non-governmental organizations.

We believe that the Commission should not take on an executive role in the detailed determination of peacebuilding priorities in countries on its agenda, but rather should focus on coordination in those fields that require the stepped-up attention of the international community so as to contribute its activities to existing mechanisms for interaction, first and foremost, within the United Nations system.

A separate area of the Commission's work should be the mobilization of additional donor resources, inter alia, through a full-fledged integration into its work of international financial institutions, regional organizations, the private sector, the creation of medium- and long-term financial mechanisms and trust funds.

We attach great importance to the Peacebuilding Fund as a mechanism for emergency financing, which promotes the involvement of longer standing development assistance mechanisms. We are cognizant of the need to bolster civilian potential of both the host States and partners providing assistance in these fields, including the United Nations, in order to resolve the task of institutional capacity-building, security sector reform and socio-economic reconstruction.

We welcome the first steps of the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions in strengthening the important assistance role played by the United Nations in this field, as well as the efforts of those regional organizations and Member States in strengthening their own peacebuilding, including civilian, capacities. These efforts must be targeted at training national experts and strengthening institutional capacities of host countries.

We cherish the hope that the issue of strengthening civilian expertise in the context of peacebuilding will be granted due attention by relevant United Nations system bodies involved in developing the Organization's potential in this field.

By way of conclusion, I would like to convey my gratitude to the delegation of the United Kingdom for the preparation of the draft presidential statement and to state that we endorse it.

Mr. President, I hope that I lived up to your expectations.

The President: My dear colleague, Mr. Churkin, you certainly have.

Mr. Weisleder (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to convey Costa Rica's condolences to the people of China and Myanmar for the catastrophes that they are living through.

I would like to thank the United Kingdom presidency for its initiative in organizing this session in order to examine challenges related to peacebuilding in the post-conflict period. In turn, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his statement made earlier today.

We have frequently said that we cannot have security without development, nor development without security. These are two inseparable elements in attaining peace and in peacebuilding. Experience has shown that achieving a sustainable peace — the end aim and the benchmark for the success of any peacekeeping operation — largely depends on the appropriate joining of these components.

For the people affected by armed conflict, the hope for a better future derives from the peace agreements that has been reached. It only becomes a reality, however, once basic economic and social needs have been met. Addressing these needs strengthens leaders who have turned away from violence and makes peace agreements sustainable.

Costa Rica believes that all United Nations actions in the area of peacekeeping should be undertaken in parallel in order to build peacebuilding. This idea is part of the recipe for success, and is, moreover, the best possible exit strategy. To that end, we agree with the proposal issued earlier by Prime Minister Gordon Brown that, when peacekeeping missions are authorized, the entire United Nations system should be able to authorize measures for stabilization and rebuilding.

For that reason, peacekeeping operations should be conceived from the very outset as integrated missions in which all of the United Nations institutional efforts dovetail effectively.

We should build on and develop to the maximum the potential of the young but ambitious architecture for peacebuilding with which we have equipped the United Nations. As a result, it would be wise, when creating or renewing peacekeeping missions, for the Council to request the Peacebuilding Commission to issue specific recommendations in order to insert an appropriate peacebuilding component in each and every one of these missions.

Moreover, we are aware that none of the possible recommendations issued by this Commission can lead to effective results, unless the necessary resources are made available to do so. As a result, this issue must be addressed expeditiously by the General Assembly. The General Assembly must take the necessary measures to ensure that the Peacebuilding Fund is available from the outset. We do not believe that there is any need to establish a new fund. To the contrary, we believe it would be best to make use of the tools available to us in the current structure, making the necessary adjustments.

A further tool that should be used to the full to make peace sustainable is the Peacebuilding Support Office. Costa Rica believes that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs need a mechanism for efficient interaction and coordination with the Peacebuilding Support Office in order to maximize synergies, share lessons learned and prevent gaps and overlap. An integrated, coherent and systemic approach to peacekeeping and peacebuilding will be developed only if we strike the right balance between authority and responsibility. Therefore, we must pay particular attention to the selection of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General. These high-ranking officials are the repository of the authority of the United Nations, coordinating all the institutional efforts on the ground. Both the Secretary-General and the Security Council must provide proper follow-up for every mission, not only to remain informed, but also to take remedial action. There is nothing more volatile or difficult to manage than a post-conflict situation. Therefore, leaders must be able to draw on the necessary support and monitoring.

The civilian component of peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations, which Costa Rica believes are two sides of the same coin in most cases, should be enhanced. We therefore deem it necessary to prioritize the creation and strengthening of rapidly deployable civilian units within the member States. In this regard, we welcome the initiatives, such as that announced by Great Britain in April, on the establishment of a civilian standby force that would be able to respond rapidly to the call of the United Nations in order to contribute towards the stabilization and rebuilding of a country emerging from conflict. Costa Rica hopes that the report that we shall be requesting from the Secretary-General in the draft presidential statement we hope to adopt at the end of this debate will include an inventory of national capacities within Member States and will identify institutional possibilities to support the creation and strengthening of such capacities.

Finally, we would once again like to thank Great Britain for its leadership in this area, which has enabled us to reflect on the need to promote a systemic approach to ensure the best possible fulfilment of the mandates of each of the principle organs of the Organization. My country is of the view that the Council should expeditiously review the manner in which it considers the contributions made during these debates that are open to the broader membership. Costa Rica feels that the draft statement — and, in general, all statements issued by the Council as a result of open debates — would be enriched if we designed mechanisms enabling us to effectively take up the concerns expressed by Member States, on whose behalf we are acting.

Mr. Hoang Chi Trung (Viet Nam): First of all, let me join previous speakers in expressing Viet Nam's most profound sympathy and condolences to the peoples and the Governments of China and Myanmar over their recent sufferings and losses.

Mr. President, the Vietnamese delegation wishes to congratulate you and the United Kingdom on your effective leadership of the work of the Council this month. We also warmly welcome your initiative to hold this important open debate and highly appreciate your substantive and succinct concept paper to that end (S/2008/291, annex). The Vietnamese delegation associates itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

In an interdependent world, where the durable peace and sustainable development of a country and a region cannot be isolated from those of others, peacebuilding continues to emerge as an essential part of the collective efforts of the United Nations and the international community to ensure the transition from conflict to peace, development and reconstruction, and to prevent the recurrence of conflicts. Past experiences in Angola, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Burundi and Timor-Leste remain vivid examples of how the long-term process of peacebuilding can help to address various political, security, socio-economic, humanitarian and development challenges in the post-conflict environment.

Experience in many other countries also reflects the fact that, even when agreements are signed and ceasefires are in place, countries may relapse into conflict or civil violence if post-conflict peacebuilding lags behind. The growing complexity of contemporary conflicts, which often have serious regional spillover and carry unpredictable socio-economic consequences, has led to tremendous constraints on post-conflict peacebuilding and has exposed its limitations in maximizing its efficiency, resources and impact on the ground. It also requires a multidimensional and multisectoral approach to peacebuilding in close correlation with other areas of equal importance, such as early warning, conflict prevention and resolution, pacific settlement of disputes, preventive diplomacy and peacekeeping operations.

At this juncture, my delegation believes that, in view of the specific characteristics of each post-conflict environment and with due respect for the fundamental principles of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, the international community should establish a more comprehensive and effective peacebuilding strategy that addresses the period extending from immediately after the cessation of conflict to the conduct of an exit strategy and that responds to the specific needs of the country concerned in each particular phase of development. The focus of such a strategy should first be tailored to complement nationally owned efforts of building full ownership and capacity. On the implementation front, the strategy might range from the reinforcement of the judicial system and the early commencement of disarmament to the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants; from the promotion of institution-building and capacity-building to national reconciliation and rehabilitation; and from the enhancement of socio-economic reform to the fulfilment of the Millennium Development Goals.

Secondly, given its unique experience and advantages in human resources and institutional mechanisms, the United Nations should play the leading role in coordination and collaboration among local governments, specialized agencies, international financial institutions, troop contributors and the international donor community in order to ensure the optimal impact of international assistance in post-conflict situations, especially in addressing the root causes of conflicts, such as hunger, poverty, disease and the inequitable distribution of social welfare. It is equally important that coordination among the United Nations principal organs, as well as between United Nations Headquarters and field missions, be enhanced and better focused, thereby helping to maximize the use of available resources and capabilities and avoiding possible overlap and duplication. In this connection, my delegation reaffirms and supports the central role of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Peacebuilding Commission as the appropriate dedicated institutional mechanisms to discuss the question of peacekeeping and peacebuilding in all its multiple dimensions.

Thirdly, it is also essential to enhance the effective cooperation and partnerships between the United Nations and regional organizations in the areas of conflict prevention, management and resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding and to strengthen the capacity of those organizations in these areas. While the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security falls within the purview of the Security Council, the mix of complementary resources and comparative advantages that regional and subregional organizations possess, including targeted expertise, local knowledge and geographical proximity, can be further exploited, in conformity with Chapter VIII of the Charter and, where appropriate, can contribute to helping countries recover from conflicts in all related fields.

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, allow me, on behalf of the people of Panama, to express our solidarity with the peoples and the Governments of China and Myanmar in view of the tragedies that they both have suffered following the recent natural disasters.

This is a timely occasion to extend to you, Mr. President, my country's most sincere gratitude for convening this meeting and for your Government's dedicated support for the consideration of the issue of post-conflict peacebuilding.

The subject that we are addressing today is how to attain lasting and sustainable peace in a country that has been affected by armed conflict, and which United Nations entities should participate in that process, the details of their involvement and, finally, their exit.

It is undeniable that the Security Council is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and, as such, is the key protagonist in the peaceful resolution of conflicts. In turn, it is universally acknowledged that, while the deployment of measures to promote and maintain peace is a prerequisite for ending conflict, it is not in itself sufficient to attain lasting peace and to prevent countries that lack the appropriate State machinery from quickly relapsing into violence.

In order to strengthen the peacebuilding process, at the 2005 World Summit, heads of State established the Peacebuilding Commission as an advisory body of the General Assembly, Economic and Social Council and Security Council. However, the resolutions establishing the Commission — resolution 1645 (2005) and do not clearly stipulate when the Security Council should end its involvement — or when the Peacebuilding Commission should take up its duties. Panama is of the view that this should not be seen as an event, but rather as a process in which the Security Council commits itself to gradually reducing its participation and influence in the peacebuilding process as the Peacebuilding Commission takes up its responsibility for the process and takes the necessary medium- and long-term measures.

To that end, it is crucial that the Security Council, from the outset, establish clear, convincing and viable mandates for the future establishment of integrated missions, which would include, from early on, programmes for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants; security sector reform; conflict resolution and reconciliation techniques; the provision of technical assistance for democratic development; the promotion and protection of human rights; assistance for victims of sexual exploitation and abuse; and stabilization and recovery efforts to be carried out by the United Nations country teams.

Our aim should be to support communities emerging from conflict with coordinated, coherent and integrated strategies and mechanisms throughout the process. Addressing the most visible symptoms also involves addressing the root causes of the conflict from the outset, immediately following the signing of a peace agreement and until the relevant communities have attained sustainable and socially responsible development.

I would like to state that Panama fully shares the view expressed earlier by the representative of Costa Rica that every United Nations peacekeeping effort should be undertaken in parallel with a peacebuilding effort. It almost goes without saying that those peace processes should be led by the country concerned, that they should include regional and subregional organizations and that they should be able to draw on the financial resources and capacities necessary for their success. In turn, leadership and communication on the ground are paramount in order to make those efforts work.

To that end, particular attention should be paid to the selection and strengthening of the coordination role of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General. Channels for communication should be ensured with the country's Resident Coordinator in order to ensure the effectiveness of those initiatives in the long term.

We would like to underscore that, for Panama, human beings with all their complexity, needs, fears and aspirations, should be placed at the heart of peacebuilding. That exercise is thus both integral and multidimensional in nature. It is the duty of the United Nations and of this Council to assist States in the responsibility to protect the human rights of post-conflict populations.

Finally, I would like to express Panama's support for the draft presidential statement that has been submitted by the Government of the United Kingdom.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to express my thanks to the United Kingdom for taking the initiative to organize this open debate on post-conflict peacebuilding. This open debate provides a forum for the international community to undertake a focused discussion on ways and means to provide more effective assistance for post-conflict peacebuilding and to strengthen mutual cooperation in that regard. That is of great significance for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Peacebuilding is a common challenge facing humankind and a major issue that the United Nations and the international community need to address urgently. In today's world, where the fates of the peoples of all countries are closely interconnected, doing a good job in peacebuilding is not only helpful in ensuring lasting peace and sustained development in post-conflict countries, but also conducive to the enhancement of the current collective security system and to the common development of mankind. The international community should attach great importance to this issue and should examine it from a global strategic perspective.

How can we ensure that conflicts do not re-erupt? How can we enable populations to enjoy the dividends of peace? How can we transition from a fragile peace to a harmonious society governed by the people and for the people? What role can the countries concerned play in peacebuilding? How can the international community, and the United Nations in particular, provide effective and timely assistance? We do not have ready answers to those questions; nor do we have much experience to rely on. It is my hope that more ideas will come out of this meeting. I would like to make a few observations on behalf of China concerning the questions I have posed.

First, the country concerned bears the primary responsibility for peacebuilding. The ultimate purpose of peacebuilding is to build a modern State that is peaceful and stable, with economic development, respect for human rights and the rule of law. The local people are the foundation of peacebuilding efforts and the biggest beneficiaries of the results of peacebuilding. Without the active participation of the Government concerned and the enthusiastic support of the local population, a lasting peace is hard to imagine. Therefore, we should trust the local people and rely on the local Government and should encourage them to use their talents and ingenuity to lay down a sound reconstruction plan so that they can truly own and fully engage in the peacebuilding process.

Secondly, the international community has the important mission of assisting the countries concerned to realize peacebuilding. As a brand new task, peacebuilding requires that the countries concerned, the United Nations system, Member States, regional organizations and civil society make concerted efforts to address problems in a variety of areas, such as security, development, human rights and the rule of law, in an integrated manner. In practice, what the countries concerned lack is often not political will, but the capacity necessary for peacebuilding. Here, the international community can use its advantage in areas such as finance and technology to provide constructive assistance to the countries concerned.

We have taken note of the relevant ideas in the concept paper prepared by the United Kingdom (S/2008/291, annex), including enhancing international coordination, ensuring flexibility in financing and establishing a civilian rapid deployment force. I wish to particularly stress that the envisaged corps of civilian experts should have expertise in a variety of areas, from security and rule of law to human rights and development, and that if conditions permit, it should help the countries concerned to build local expertise. We encourage Member States and the relevant organizations to assume the principal responsibility in that connection and we believe that the United Nations can play an active role in that regard.

Thirdly, the African continent should be accorded priority attention with respect to peacebuilding. As one of the most turbulent continents of our world and the region where optimism about achieving the Millennium Development Goals is at its lowest ebb, Africa faces such multiple challenges as frequent conflicts, economic backwardness, severe natural disasters, food crises and so on. We must recognize the fact that, without stability and development in Africa, there will be no world peace or prosperity. By helping Africa, we are helping ourselves. Currently, peace in many African countries is extremely fragile and urgently needs our special attention and careful nurturing.

The agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission is currently dominated by the situation in African countries, demonstrating the universal agreement of the international community concerning the special needs of Africa. In the future, the international community should continue to increase its contribution to the cause of peacebuilding in Africa.

As the organ entrusted with the sacred mission of maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council should play a crucial role in peacebuilding. We should work together with other United Nations organs — such as the Peacebuilding Commission, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council — rely on the membership of the United Nations, enhance coordination with regional organizations, continuously promote the idea of peacebuilding, and continue to nurture the cause of peacebuilding.

Mr. Spatafora (Italy): Through you, Sir, may I offer a very sincere welcome and express my strong appreciation to Mr. Miliband for his presence here. I must say that his presence here is intended to flag the fact that today is not business as usual. This is a very special debate, and we are grateful to the United Kingdom Government for the political vision that is behind it.

Listening to the statements that have been made so far, I would say that, at the end of the day, what is at stake here is how to make the Council, and through it the Organization and the other stakeholders in the private sector and civil society, more relevant on the ground so as to make a difference and offer a concrete horizon of hope to people who have suffered and are suffering, as recalled by you, Sir.

What we want to have today is, I think, a wake-up call, as was said so eloquently by Minister Bangura. We have also heard a very strong wake-up call from Mr. Brahimi — a distillate of operational and political wisdom, a backdrop that we have to keep in mind in our decisions. I would go further and say that, if we do not have the caveats that were so eloquently highlighted by Mr. Brahimi clear in our minds and in our behaviour on the ground, we will certainly be heading towards failure or, at best, ineffectiveness and irrelevance.

Italy fully associates itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union, so allow me to make just a few additional remarks.

In the crucial phase immediately after the cessation of a conflict and before the deployment of a peacekeeping mission, there is still no established intervention mechanism that can lay the foundations for reconstruction and assistance to national authorities. Italy is a firm supporter of developing greater rapid-deployment civilian capacities at the United Nations. We support a strong rule of law standing capacity, consisting of experts in areas crucial to the success of a stabilization action, especially juries, judges, administrators and political advisers.

However, with respect to that issue, we must of course keep clearly in mind what Mr. Brahimi has told us and the caveats that he has put forward, which I will not repeat. Such a capacity could be modelled on the standing police capacity, which would benefit from an increase in staff. We believe that the international community should collaborate on the formation of a nucleus of rapidly deployable civilian peacekeepers, who would partner with local authorities — who would be at the core of the effort — to draft a civil and economic reconstruction strategy in every area and lay the foundations for the work of the peacekeeping operation. Interested Member States could contribute by establishing inter-ministerial teams of peacebuilding specialists, including non-governmental organizations and other members of civil society.

At the same time, we need to strengthen the civilian component of peacekeeping missions and better integrate the military and civilian instruments. To that end, it is essential to adequately structure and update professional training, on which Italy has focused in the framework of the Centre of Excellence for Stability Police Units and through its hosting of various United Nations and national institutes dedicated to the training of peacekeeping and peacebuilding professionals.

Italy supports the United Nations central role in peacebuilding. We thus hope that the development of the international community's intervention capacities will be accompanied by a more incisive United Nations role, particularly through the strengthening of the functions of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, as has been said by others. The goal is to foster greater coordination among the various United Nations system bodies and other stakeholders — such as donors, international financial institutions, regional organizations, the private sector and civil society — in such a way as to address post-conflict needs, starting on day one after the cessation of hostilities. A good start would be to launch, for example, a database and to create a network between organizations that are already active in the area.

Allow me to make a final consideration. Populations tormented by conflicts need concrete and immediate dividends on the ground that can provide relief for suffering and foster the gradual return of a secure, socially organized life governed by the rule of law and sustained by economic prospects. In most cases, at least one year goes by between the end of hostilities and the beginning of appropriation from the trust fund created for the reconstruction of a country, apart from the most urgent humanitarian interventions. That is too much time, considering the urgency of the needs and the broad array of actions needed. More rapid and flexible financing mechanisms are required to address that crucial initial phase. I will not repeat what has been said by Mr. Brahimi, the Deputy Minister of Belgium and others on that issue.

The obvious choice would be to strengthen and give greater centrality to an existing instrument — the Peacebuilding Fund — rather than to create new mechanisms that risk making intervention even more complex. Here, I fully endorse what was said in particular by the Minister of Defence of South Africa, as well as by my colleague from Costa Rica. In the months to come, we will have to review the Peacebuilding Fund's terms of reference in the light of past experience. It is our hope that the review will be conducive to making the Fund more effective and more consonant with the need for immediate intervention implicit in the original conception, and above all to strengthening the catalysing function of intervention financed by other donors, so that resources are not distributed haphazardly and indiscriminately.

Mr. Ettalhi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, on behalf of my country, I should like to convey my deepest condolences to the peoples of China and Myanmar on the huge human losses they have suffered.

I should also like to thank the United Kingdom for organizing this debate on an issue of great importance. We highly appreciate the presence of Mr. Miliband, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

First, I wish to emphasize that my delegation aligns itself with the statement to be made by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. I should like to make a few additional remarks.

As was declared at the 2005 World Summit, development, peace, security and human rights are interdependent and mutually reinforcing areas. That basic principle should be taken into consideration in any discussion about post-conflict peacebuilding. In that context and because of the limitations of our experience, I should like to make a few brief comments.

First, in post-conflict peacebuilding, it is essential that peacekeeping forces should not be withdrawn before ensuring that the conditions in the country concerned have become appropriate, because a premature withdrawal could plunge the country back into conflict and violence — a situation that is particularly difficult to address. Peacebuilding requires that we take a comprehensive approach in restoring a secure environment, placing priority on building State institutions, rebuilding police and military forces, establishing the rule of law and promoting human rights, with a particular emphasis on eradicating poverty, hunger and marginalization. At a later stage, it requires that we lay the foundations for sustainable development and build the Government's capacity to provide essential public services, including health care and education, and to ovate employment opportunities. All of that should be carried out with full respect for the sovereignty of the country concerned and for its ownership of all processes under its leadership.

Secondly, viability and sustainability of the peacebuilding process requires the commitment and participation of all local actors and responsible implementation. As already noted, the process should be comprehensive and based on mutual commitments, pledges and contacts between all national actors concerned.

Thirdly, we wish to highlight the important role that can be played by regional and subregional organizations and States, in addition to the international community, by providing the necessary support for the efforts of the country concerned in order to increase its confidence and ensure that it does not slide back into violence, so that it can make the transition to economic stability and prosperity.

We also wish to emphasize the pivotal role that can be played by neighbouring States in achieving national reconciliation and accord — particularly in Africa, because of transborder cultural and tribal relationships. Here, too, it is essential to provide international support for the Government concerned, in the form of the funds and expertise needed to facilitate its implementation of post-conflict projects and strategies in accordance with its priorities. We do not deny the importance of providing such support at the bilateral level, but we believe that it is more effective if it is provided to the Peacebuilding Fund and to experts who work under United Nations auspices.

Fourthly, we believe that it is imperative to establish mechanisms for full coordination and expertise-sharing between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Economic and Social Council so as to guarantee the effective performance of those United Nations organs in the area of post-conflict peacebuilding, and so that they can mobilize donors, ensure that pledges are honoured and move beyond addressing immediate problems to comprehensive reconstruction and sustained assistance, which should be provided to all development projects in the countries concerned.

Fifthly, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund are the peacebuilding structures of the United Nations. Since its establishment, the Commission has sought to take a comprehensive approach to post-conflict peacebuilding that takes into account the links between security, development, human rights and the rule of law. Maintaining that approach will ensure that countries do not relapse into conflict and violence.

Finally, as emphasized by many preceding speakers, the international community must provide the necessary funding to the Peacebuilding Commission by donating to the Peacebuilding Fund, so that post-conflict countries can carry out their strategies and help the United Nations consolidate the peace. That includes implementing projects in priority areas, mainly disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, security sector reform, reconciliation efforts and reconstruction, which are essential for sustainable development.

We thank the United Kingdom for providing the final version of the draft presidential statement that was circulated this morning and which we support.

Mr. Khalilzad (United States of America): First of all, I would like to express our solidarity, sympathy and support to the people of China and Burma on their losses and suffering as a result of recent natural disasters. Secondly, I would like to thank you, Mr. Foreign Secretary, for your leadership in organizing this Security Council debate on the important topic of post-conflict peacebuilding.

A good metaphor for the immediate post-conflict period is the so-called golden hour — the period immediately after a person suffers a severe trauma and during which, if he or she receives treatment, the chances of recovery are much greater than if help comes later. If we can find better ways to improve people's lives in the golden hour after a conflict ends or as territory begins to be stabilized in a conflict, we can dramatically improve the efficiency and success of later stabilization and reconstruction efforts.

We believe that the Peacebuilding Commission, which is less than 2 years old, could ultimately play an important role in United Nations peacebuilding, by helping to marshal the necessary resources during this golden hour and subsequently ensuring that peacebuilding is sustainable. As the representative of France stated, the working methods of the Peacebuilding Commission need to be strengthened to make it as effective as possible.

I would like to say a few words about the three key gaps identified in the United Kingdom's concept note as hampering international efforts for stabilization and building sustainable peace.

The first is the need for strong leadership on the ground. It has frequently been noted that successful implementation of Council mandates must involve a huge number of United Nations, regional and other international-community actors. Leadership on the ground requires excellent coordination. The role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, who must have a clear mandate with the necessary authorities and resources, is critical.

We support ongoing work to ensure proper integration of United Nations missions. The Special Representative will need training and support in promoting an integrated and coordinated approach to promoting stability that draws upon all the resources of the United Nations system. The United Nations leadership should take advantage of the Peacebuilding Commission's ability to convene all stakeholders and promote an integrated strategic vision in tackling threats to stability.

The second gap is an inability to rapidly deploy sufficient civilian capacity. We agree that skilled civilians, such as police officers, judges, relief workers, administrators and other civilian experts, are as important as troops during the golden hour. We therefore urge Member States to build up capacity for deployment of civilians with the relevant areas of expertise necessary for sustainable peacebuilding. We have been working on this effort in the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization through ongoing work to prepare for post-conflict work more than 4,000 deployable civilians, who would be available to join international efforts as appropriate. Just as critically, we need to devise ways rapidly to train local personnel and build host-nation State institutions to carry out those functions as soon as possible.

Third is the need for rapid and flexible funding. Simply attracting adequate financial resources is often an enormous challenge for the international community in this field. We must recognize that to intervene without sufficient resources is to court failure. We stand ready to explore various ways of streamlining and improving these mechanisms, including the Peacebuilding Fund. Also, we must fully utilize the surge of resources during an international civilian/military operation to ensure that reconstruction, stabilization and development can later be sustained with more modest levels of donor assistance.

In addition to the three key gaps identified in the concept paper, I would like to highlight several additional issues that need to be taken into account in order to produce success.

As the international community engages in a post-conflict situation, a compact should exist between local leaders and the international community, but for those compacts to be productive, they should consist of a clear articulation of goals, priorities and benchmarks for both sides, and a review process. The international community must do better in building institutions for security and the rule of law, particularly police forces that can be trusted by all local communities and factions, and in carrying out the decommissioning, demobilization and reintegration programmes with a more robust process for reintegrating former combatants.

Peacebuilding strategies should build capacity in other local institutions, and priority should be placed on creating the ability of local leaders to manage public finance. Additional focus should be given to energizing the private sector, especially removing obstacles to the creation of local businesses that can produce goods and services to meet local needs — that is, to jump-start the private economy, not just engage in reconstruction contracting.

We must take into account the regional dimensions of conflicts, which often require engagement to preclude local parties from receiving support from neighbouring countries or creating sanctuaries in their territories, and to leverage an environment conducive to the success of the stabilization effort.

Peacebuilding requires the international community to engage as long as needed but to act in ways that encourage increasing shifts to self-reliance by building and using local capacity, and, as Mr. Brahimi said, by getting itself out of a job as soon as possible.

The international community can do better in addressing peacebuilding challenges. We must resolve to develop the kind of peacebuilding capacities that are required to fulfil our mandate to advance international peace and security and to improve the prospects for success in post-conflict situations.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my national capacity.

Can I first of all thank all the speakers so far who have engaged in such a disciplined way, and also a constructive and honest way, with the difficult issues that we are confronting. I will abbreviate the speech that is being circulated, in the interests of time.

I think it is worth remembering that the founding objective of the United Nations was to secure peace after the ravages of Second World War. On one indicator, since the end of the cold war there has been a welcome decline in the number of armed conflicts, a decline of about 40 per cent. But there is another statistic, which I do not think has been cited today, that is nonetheless significant and speaks directly to the point that Ambassador Khalilzad has just made. He referred to a golden hour. The statistic that I have is that 30 per cent of conflicts break out again within five years of a peace settlement. I think that speaks to the challenge that he laid out for us.

It is obviously a challenge for the parties to a peace settlement, but it is also a challenge to the international community for the way it delivers support. I would like to highlight what the Foreign Minister of Sierra Leone said about local ownership and local responsibility. Her story, I think, is obviously one in which the international community has played a role by helping to end the fighting. But the real success is the work that has been led by the Government and people of Sierra Leone. That is the lesson we need to take forward as we address the three questions that were posed in the concept paper that we circulated (S/2005/291).

I would like to reflect briefly on the difference between success and failure in the number of examples that have been given today in each of the three areas.

The first concerns effective leadership. A fragmented international response is unable to be the right sort of responsible partner for any country trying to seek stability after conflict. That is a major issue in the case of Afghanistan, where the recent appointment of Mr. Kai Eide is very important for that country. But the United Kingdom also believes it is important to bring together the civil and military functions that too often have been separate. It is not just a matter of coordinating institutions; it is also a matter of integrating functions, and that is what we will be doing through our combined civil/military mission in Helmand province.

The second priority that we highlighted in our paper concerned civilian expertise, and some very good points have been made about that today. At the moment, over 130 British civilian experts are working in international missions, but our Prime Minister has committed us to developing a pool of about 1,000 such experts, from customs officials to judges and police officers, able to work on a standby basis and therefore to deploy at speed in areas where needed. I am very conscious of what the South African Defence Minister said about the need for the international community to be able to respond in real time, not in bureaucratic time. I think the development of a standby capacity is important in that respect.

The third challenge in the paper concerns funding. Here I do want to highlight the option of a United Nations recovery fund, to which donors commit funds in advance so that resources are there to kick-start recovery efforts, rather than having to spend time raising the money once the crisis has emerged. We have national arrangements for funding stabilization and recovery, but at the moment there is not a central international source of funding, and I think we could benefit from having one.

I want to conclude by returning to the theme that we started our discussion with today. We began with a minute's silence for the victims in China and Myanmar.

The issues of leadership, expertise and funding that we highlight in our paper on post-conflict stabilization are also important in responding to humanitarian disasters. In the United Kingdom we have taken enormous heart from the fact that in the midst of terrible tragedy in China we have seen Japanese rescue teams working alongside Chinese colleagues to help save lives. I believe is an important example.

Sadly, we have not yet the same level of international cooperation with the Burmese authorities. Our interest in the situation in Burma is humanitarian. From a briefing this morning, I understand that the people of Burma desperately need boats, helicopters and logistics experts, as well as medical supplies and food, to ensure the massive step-up in the delivery effort that is needed. The challenge is to put in place an emergency response of the scale that we saw for the Asian tsunami and the Pakistan earthquake. I am sure we all hope that the Secretary-General will be able to bring about that level of effort through his good offices and his meetings in Rangoon this week.

Let me end where I began by saying that resolving conflict is at the heart of the Security Council's agenda. One of the lessons of the past 20 years is that there is a need for civilian expertise to be deployed rapidly to support Governments. We need their people, their funding and their leadership. Like many others who have spoken today, we too look to the Secretary-General to offer, on the basis of this discussion, advice that helps to develop an international capacity sufficient to the task.

That concludes my national statement, which I hope respected the time limit that I set for others. I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

It is my great honour to welcome Mr. Nikola Špirić, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to invite him to take the floor.

Mr. Špirić (Bosnia and Herzegovina) (*spoke in Bosnian; English text provided by the delegation*): At the outset, I would like to express my condolences to the peoples of China and Myanmar on the occasion of the tragic catastrophes that took place in those countries.

I would like to thank you very much, Mr. President, for convening this meeting on such an important subject as post-conflict peacebuilding. Please let me express my appreciation for the opportunity to address the Security Council during this important debate in order to share with it the experiences of my country since 1995 and to share my views regarding the international community's involvement in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I come from a country where a tragic conflict took place between 1992 and 1995 ending with the Dayton Peace Accord, which was negotiated under the auspices of the international community. I use the term "tragic conflict" deliberately, given the fact that the term was used by the authors of the Dayton Peace Accord. Such a definition, avoiding words such as aggression and civil war, makes it possible to take a more courageous step out of an inglorious and unfortunate past that cannot be changed. Such a step will, hopefully, lead us into a future that includes coexistence, tolerance, reconciliation and forgiveness as guarantees for the ultimate success of my country.

The Dayton Peace Accord ensured the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its constitutional framework, under which the country consists of two entities — the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina — with a clear constitutional basis. A formula was therefore established that would mean success for all. A strong State means strong entities and strong entities mean a strong State; or, to use terms from the world of sport, strong football clubs make for a strong national team. Unfortunately, some would like to change that formula without offering a better one in its place, a problem that confirms the very vision of the authors of Dayton Peace Accord.

With various degrees of success and with the assistance of the international community, since 1995 Bosnia and Herzegovina has overcome many obstacles, faced many challenges and carried out many reforms. I would like to mention a few.

Defence reform has been successfully completed, which is considered to be the best reform project in Bosnia and Herzegovina. That reform has led Bosnia and Herzegovina to join the Partnership for Peace, thereby enabling my country to cease being a mere consumer of NATO peace operations and become an ally in the peace operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. At the Bucharest NATO summit, NATO member States decided to initiate an intensive dialogue with Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are also committed to working towards full membership of NATO.

We have established a unified intelligence sector by successfully emerging two previously opposed intelligence agencies into a State-level body with all the responsibilities of any modern intelligence service anywhere in the world.

The process of reforming the taxation system was significantly advanced through the introduction of a value-added tax that ensures a steady inflow of revenue and reduces tax evasion and the grey economy.

We have implemented justice system reform and begun trials for war crimes suspects within the justice system of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We are now working on education reform and have thus far adopted all the necessary legislation.

We are actively working on public administration reform, and even reform of the sports sector is under way.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has made significant progress in the economic realm. Although we may agree that it is not yet satisfactory, there is no question that the economy is on the right track. In 2007, the real growth rate in the gross domestic product was 6.1 per cent. The projected growth rate for 2008 is 6.5 per cent. Further growth is expected in 2009 and 2010. Foreign direct investment in Bosnia and Herzegovina reached record highs during 2007.

The reforms and economic progress to which I have just referred have been accompanied by accomplishments with regard to relations with neighbouring countries and foreign policy as a whole. Bosnia and Herzegovina has become a member of the Council of Europe and the Partnership for Peace. Sarajevo has been chosen as the headquarters of the Regional Cooperation Council centre for South-Eastern Europe. Bosnia and Herzegovina has also become a member of the Human Rights Council. And, in December 2007, we initialled the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the European Union. After fulfilling the final political requirement for the signing of the Agreement, we expect that Brussels will inform us of the date for the signing ceremony.

It is important to mention that Bosnia and Herzegovina is currently participating in six United Nations peacekeeping missions around the world: three military missions — in Ethiopia and Eritrea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Iraq — and three police missions — in Liberia, Cyprus and the Sudan.

Everything that I have mentioned serves to prove that Bosnia and Herzegovina has made progress in the recent past. I am fully aware that more could have been done, although we still face many unresolved issues and difficult challenges. I would like to remind the Council that, just 13 years ago, Bosnia and Herzegovina was in the midst of a bloody war. Since then we have been the only country in Europe to experience three extremely difficult and demanding processes, namely, the reconstruction of a war-ravaged country, the re-establishment of trust between three former warring factions and the process of transition and Euro-Atlantic integration. Those processes have been very difficult but, with the help of the international community, we have successfully concluded that phase of the Dayton Accord.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation for the international community's involvement in the post-conflict recovery of my country. Many great things have been done, from its active role in stopping the war — the most important thing — to its active participation in, and support for, the reforms. From the very end of the war, the international community has implemented a special model of indirect rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina through the High Representative and his Office and the strong powers conferred by the Bonn Conference, which has now resulted in various disputes.

Those powers included the ability of the High Representative to remove elected officials and to impose laws and decisions. I do not want to argue that that was not necessary immediately following the war in order for progress to take place, but today we must reconsider those powers, for many have found them to be very much in conflict with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I believe that those powers also contradict the Brussels road map for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Moreover, the Council would agree that the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2008 is significantly different from the circumstances in 1995 or 1996. It is therefore almost certain that, more than 10 years after Dayton, the model for administering Bosnia and Herzegovina through the High Representative and his Office has been exhausted and that it is now time to look for a new formula for success in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

One should bear in mind that the international community, which undoubtedly had the best of intentions, created major dependences among local politicians. I have repeatedly said that domestic politicians feel that they do not have to deal with or discuss difficult issues or seek compromise, because they know that the representatives of the international community will do it for them. That is not the right way to do things.

Given everything I have mentioned, I am convinced that Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to take a new step forward and move into a new stage. I would call it a sobering-up phase. Now is the time to realize that we must step out of the wheelchair and take responsibility for crucial processes, not just formally but substantively. It is time for our friends to advise and support us, but not to speak and work in our place. I know that the beginning will be painful, but I am sure that that is the only way for us to realize that all of us living in Bosnia and Herzegovina must turn to each other. That is the only way to establish the necessary dialogue among elected officials. I also think that Bosnia and Herzegovina, like any other post-conflict country, needs to build trust within, along with dialogue and reforms. I daresay that the building of trust is more important that any reform. When dialogue, respect and fruitful discussion prevail, we can say that we are making good progress. It is in striving to reach that goal that we, the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, need each other the most. I would like once again to emphasize that only citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and not the Office of the High Representative nor the international community, can create a future based on compromise.

In my opinion, the following lesson has been learned in Bosnia and Herzegovina: the international community's engagement in post-conflict countries is not just needed but necessary, but it must be precisely defined and limited and have a clear exit strategy. Otherwise, sooner or later, that engagement will become counterproductive.

At the same time, one should bear in mind that every crisis in the world has its own specificities and should therefore be approached analytically, taking into account the roots of the crisis and the culture, history, civilization, religion and customs of the people living there. A successful methodology that has been used in one place cannot become a mere blueprint for the next, because there is no guarantee that it will be useful in other places. Each individual crisis should be approached without prejudging it and should be carefully analysed with respect to how and where particular lessons learned could be applied and where new, original models have to be developed.

The President: We now have time, assuming they stick to the five minute limit, for two final European speakers. First of all, I give the floor to my good friend, Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain.

Mr. Moratinos (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): First and foremost, allow me to join with all those who have conveyed their solidarity and condolences to the peoples and authorities of China and Myanmar for the natural disasters that they have recently been affected by. And above all, allow me to express my pleasure at participating in this debate on strategies for post-conflict stabilization on the eve of the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the launching of United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Spain is firmly committed to global peacebuilding and to the enhancement of civilian aspects of crisis management. It is for that reason that Spain also chose this issue for the thematic debate organized by Spain in this Council during the Spanish presidency in 2004.

Peacebuilding is the most important challenge that the international community faces, and we must spare neither commitment nor efforts in order to achieve it. As the sixteenth century Spanish humanist Juan Luis Vives wrote, the first condition for peace is to have the will to achieve it. That is why a peace process must lead to a rapid implementation of its terms so that the population may immediately benefit from its dividends. For this reason, we must pay preferential attention to rapid upfront support mechanisms that alleviate the suffering of local people and that meet their most urgent needs. The driving force behind these actions must be reflected in mission mandates as well as in public communication strategies that favour mutual understanding with the affected populations within which they operate.

Post-conflict management must also tackle the deep roots of confrontation in order for peace to be durable. This requires prolonged efforts on the past of the international community, even though the primary responsibility lies, as has been said here earlier, with the authorities of the country recovering from conflict.

To this end, peace and coexistence require the firm commitment of Governments, and harmony and inclusion are the bases upon which a social State and the rule of law must be established.

The concept of the peace mission is a living, evolving concept. Peace missions are increasingly complex, and some of the latest operations authorized by the Security Council have shown that they no longer correspond to the limited notion that inspired the operations of 60 years ago. Terms such as "hybrid operation", "multidimensional", "peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding", are applied ever more frequently, although the international community is still not able to respond adequately to the challenges posed by these complex situations.

One of the areas in which the international community has been unable to keep pace with reality is the incorporation of civilians, as was mentioned by the representative of the United States. Civilians play an essential role in missions, given the nature of the majority of violent conflicts, as well as the challenges and particular aspects involved in reconstruction. We must not only include a greater number of civilian experts in missions, but we must also legitimize their functions and provide these experts with the means to carry out their tasks, in accordance with the relevant mission mandate. All in all, we should move towards the establishment of a body of experienced and specialized civilian experts, providing them with promotion and career opportunities within this Organization, in order to be able to fulfil a variety of tasks such as contributing to the strengthening of institutions of a post-conflict society and advising central and local authorities on the establishment of the rule of law, on the true separation of powers and on security sector reform. These challenges demand greater efforts by donor States and must be realistically reflected in peace mission mandates. In this regard, Spain is committed to updating and improving its contributions in police matters.

For these reasons, it would be advisable to have stable civilian teams, along the lines of the Secretariat's recently established Standing Police Capacity. It is essential that we launch a unit to identify experts, train them and ensure their effective availability so that they can join the mission from the first moment. This perspective applies, in particular, to experts in the field of the administration of justice.

The success of these tasks hinges on civilian capacities and on the availability of greater economic resources — hence the importance of linking more closely with national organizations for cooperation and development. Therefore, the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission and its Fund point in the right direction.

With this goal in mind, Spain will soon adopt a cooperation strategy for peacebuilding, which will consolidate our action in peace processes and present lessons learned from the Spanish experience in places such as Central America, the Balkans and Southern Africa where our country has participated. In spite of the achievements that have been made, a great deal remains to be done.

It would be desirable, as has been said frequently this morning, for there to be a new focus in the formulation, mandating, implementation and follow-up of peace missions, as well as in all efforts geared towards post-conflict reconstruction, bearing in mind that, ultimately, ownership of any post-conflict reconstruction process belongs to the country that has suffered the conflict.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, Mr. Maxime Verhagen.

Mr. Verhagen (Netherlands): Mr. President, I join you and others in expressing my sincere condolences to the people of China and Burma/Myanmar.

Securing sustainable peace is even harder than ending armed conflict. Today, as the international community is engaged in efforts to end armed conflicts in many places, we must prepare to undertake the difficult task that is securing sustainable peace. That is extremely urgent and this debate is extremely timely. I therefore commend the United Kingdom for its initiative in organizing it.

Peace is more than the absence of armed conflict. Peace encompasses freedom from want and fear, and freedom of religion and expression. Peace is the ability to live a decent life, raise a family and not have reason to fear that authorities or others might hurt one or one's family.

Peace is about living in a country with people of different beliefs, races and convictions, where human rights are respected and where one is governed by legitimate leaders who know that their legitimacy rests on the quality and fairness of their decisions. Peace requires the rule of law domestically, and if it fails domestically, then it must come through international institutions such as the International Criminal Court and the special tribunals set up by this Council.

Finally, peace is also about being protected by one's Government against harm, and about being helped by the Government if one is harmed, by arms, by man-made disasters or by natural disasters such as the cyclone that hit Burma two weeks ago or the earthquake that hit China last week. And while all this may seem simple and fundamental, this kind of peace is elusive for millions. That is what today's debate is about: what can we do better to help people — real people — to reach real peace.

As is pointed out in the excellent note prepared by the President, the primary responsibility for building peace and stimulating sustainable development after conflict lies with national authorities. The principle of the responsibility to protect, embraced by all of us at the 2005 summit, stresses that each individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations. That responsibility is broad.

The principle of the responsibility to protect is not, in my view, aimed at eroding or undermining the principle of national sovereignty. It aims to promote responsible conduct by governments, or — as was suggested yesterday by the President — responsible sovereignty. So, in my view, it also includes protection against non-man-made threats, such as the effects of natural disasters. Why? Because gross negligence and woefully inadequate responses to such threats may actually lead to even greater humanitarian suffering. Suffering may be caused to such an extent that the inadequate response must be considered a crime against humanity, thus forming a ground for action by this Council.

It follows that when a government cannot or does not effectively live up to its responsibility, the international community must act. The Security Council is the central forum for debate and discussions in such cases, while member States can join assistance efforts. Against this background, I warmly support the leadership role taken up by the Secretary-General and some countries, notably those of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, to come to the rescue of the suffering Burmese people. The Government and people of the Netherlands are committed to supporting these efforts.

I return to peacebuilding after armed conflict. As has been pointed out by others, crucial elements in meeting the challenge of building peace after conflict are timing, coordination and assuring that the capacity for assistance is ready to be deployed right when needed. Those factors are crucial for timely action.

Next to the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission has a central role to play in mobilizing support, if possible even before fighting has ended. We expect the Commission to ensure that countries that are donor orphans are not left behind.

We see a pivotal role for United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to lead in the recovery phase, enabling the Government to provide basic services and helping to restore the social fabric. It urgently needs to develop greater surge capacity, working with United Nations agencies and others like NATO and the European Union. Hence the necessity for coordination and hence our support for strengthened roles of the representatives of the United Nations. Afghanistan is a case in point, and my Government will be very pleased when the United Nations is able to spread its presence throughout the country.

Allow me to underscore the urgent need for coordination both by and within the United Nations. The roles of the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission, UNDP and others must be channelled through a single United Nations office in the country concerned.

Regarding capacity, I agree that the challenge is to create effective ways for making expert capacity permanently available, through pooling, for example. We all face the same difficulty as others do: there are too few experts are available when we need them.

The need for flexible funding is evident. In the Netherlands, we have created a stability fund with this aim. It can be used for both official development assistance (ODA) and non-ODA. We suggest that others set up similar funds.

When peace is in sight, there is no time to lose. Peacebuilding requires the provision of basic services, effective and inclusive dialogue and providing people with secure and safe livelihoods. We call for strong United Nations leadership and pledge our support for efforts in this respect.

The President: I think that is a very good note on which to conclude the morning session. I am extremely grateful to all those who have contributed so far, many of whom have come from a very long distance. There are 30 speakers this afternoon to take the debate forward.

I am reminded of the quotation from our Spanish colleague: If the first condition of peace is the will to achieve it, then I think that this morning's debate has helped to show genuine will, and I look forward to it being taken forward.

The meeting was suspended at 1.05 p.m.

United Nations

S/PV.5895 (Resumption 1)

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5895th meeting

Tuesday, 20 May 2008, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Sir John Sawers/Ms. Pierce	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Belgium	Mr. Dhaene
Burkina Faso	Mr. Koudougou
China	Mr. Du Xiacong
Costa Rica	Ms. Villalobos
Croatia	Mr. Vilović
France	Mr. Deruffe
Indonesia	Mr. Kleib
Italy	Mr. Spatafora
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
Panama	Ms. Jácome
Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
South Africa	Ms. Qwabe
United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis
Viet Nam	Mr. Hoang Chi Trung

Agenda

Post-conflict peacebuilding

Letter dated 2 May 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2008/291)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

08-34772 (E)

The meeting resumed at 3.15 p.m.

The President: I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to within five minutes so that the Council can carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with statements likely to be longer than five minutes are invited to circulate the texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I now give the floor to Mr. Yukio Takasu, Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Japan.

Mr. Takasu: I would like to express my deep appreciation to the United Kingdom for its leadership and timely initiative in convening this open debate. I am grateful for the invitation to attend in my capacity as the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission. I am also grateful for the very kind words expressed to the Peacebuilding Commission by many speakers this morning.

The Peacebuilding Commission was established to address the complex challenges of post-conflict reconstruction. I have made conscious efforts to guide the attention of the Commission to peacebuilding gaps in achieving a smooth shift from peacekeeping activities and transition to development. I therefore welcome the opportunity to discuss the issues highlighted in the President's concept note.

First, the Commission's experiences confirm the centrality of national ownership, which is not only for priority activities selected by the Government. It must also serve as the prime mover in carrying out political, security and economic reform. Such leadership and commitment by national Governments are prerequisites to any successful peacebuilding effort. National ownership must be complemented by partnership with local stakeholders and the international partners. In that regard, I would like to stress the important role of the United Nations leadership on the ground.

In both Burundi and Sierra Leone, the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General facilitated the promotion of dialogue among all stakeholders on the ground. Through that process, the integrated peacebuilding strategy was developed to serve as a framework for the coordination of various existing and evolving activities. The leadership of the United Nations representative is also crucial to monitoring progress and issuing early warnings on shortfalls in implementation.

The United Nations representative needs to be equipped with appropriate mandates and resources to execute leadership. At the same time, leadership must be exercised in an informal and flexible manner to mobilize the full cooperation of all stakeholders. Peacebuilding efforts can be more effective when a lead country takes direct charge in supporting a particular country, working in tandem with the United Nations, and brings in new, non-traditional partners.

Secondly, national leadership requires functional institutional and human capacities at the State and local levels. Those capacities are usually limited in most countries emerging from conflict, as many speakers mentioned this morning. It is essential for international partners to ensure the timely deployment of civilian expertise to assist in rebuilding national capacities. Peacebuilding requires the active involvement of multifaceted partners with varied expertise and specialties in such areas as governance, the rule of law, the security and judicial sectors, civil administration — including financial management — basic services, the rehabilitation of infrastructure and private sector development.

The deployment of such expertise should be based on a clear prioritization of peacebuilding needs in each particular phase, linked to priority areas that the Peacebuilding Commission has identified. We welcome the efforts of several Governments, including that of the United Kingdom, to train and maintain a roster of civilian specialists with the various skills and capacities necessary for peacebuilding efforts. We should examine an appropriate mechanism in the United Nations to mobilize those experienced specialists in a speedy manner to support post-conflict capacity-building.

Thirdly, speedy and flexible funding to meet urgent requirements has been a major concern. The Peacebuilding Fund was established to provide catalytic funding in order to fill the immediate funding gaps in the critical areas, activate potential multiplier effects for stability, and induce additional resources for longer-term sustained support. While its volume has surpassed the original target of $250 million with contributions from 45 donors, it would be desirable to see a higher level of resources in light of increasing demands. I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to all Member States to make generous contributions to the Fund.

The Peacebuilding Fund has been successfully assisting several post-conflict countries, but it is not expected to meet all peacebuilding needs. To achieve maximum impacts on the ground, we should improve the coordination of multilateral and bilateral donors in the country. It will also be important to seek additional means of mobilizing resources to complement the catalytic and therefore limited role of the Peacebuilding Fund. We welcome any innovative proposal, including those of the United Kingdom and others, to increase resources to post-conflict countries that will complement the existing mechanisms and ensure the coherence and effectiveness of all funding resources.

It is clear that there are still many conceptual and operational questions that need to be addressed to better respond to the enormous challenges of post-conflict peacebuilding. The Peacebuilding Commission is ready to engage in further consideration on some of the issues the Security Council has discussed today. I hope that today's discussion will inspire specific actions that we can move forward to strengthen United Nations peacebuilding activities. Finally, I would like again to thank the Security Council for its support for the Peacebuilding Commission.

Before I conclude my statement, allow me to say just a few words in my national capacity.

As Prime Minister Fukuda of Japan expressed in January this year, Japan is determined to play a further active role in the international community as a peace-fostering nation. To that end, we have taken a variety of initiatives to support peacebuilding activities all over the world. Among other things, Japan has extended substantial support to strengthen the peacekeeping and peacebuilding capacities of many African countries, including five peacekeeping operation centres. Last year, we launched a pilot programme for peacebuilding human resources development, which will contribute to meeting some of the gaps I have discussed today. Twenty-nine graduates of the course from Japan and neighbouring countries in Asia are currently working in countries including the Sudan, Timor-Leste and Nepal. The initiative will be expanded into a fully scaled-up programme next year.

Moreover, peacekeeping and peacebuilding will be one of the priority issues to be considered at the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development, to be held in Yokohoma this month, and at the Group of Eight Summit to be held in Toyako, Hokkaido, in July. Japan remains committed to making the utmost efforts to strengthen international peacebuilding activities and to enhance global capacity in this field.

The President: I thank the Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission for his statement and for his comments in his capacity as representative of Japan. I think we are all agreed as to the centrality and importance of the Commission in this work.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like at the outset to express my delegation's appreciation to the United Kingdom for convening this important debate and for the concept paper (S/2008/291, annex) prepared in advance of this discussion.

My delegation aligns itself with and supports the statement to be made by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The concept paper forms the basis for a discussion of three major areas that, we all agree, need to be addressed more robustly within the United Nations system. While we agree with the objective assessment that there is a need for further United Nations efforts to address those areas, we must always bear in mind the discussions that took place prior to the 2005 World Summit, at which it was concluded that there were a number of gaps that must be filled by the United Nations, including the three topics covered by the concept paper.

The world leaders gathered at the Summit therefore agreed to establish the Peacebuilding Commission to carry out the tasks set out in the resolutions providing for its establishment (resolution 1645 (2005) and General Assembly resolution 60/180), in particular bringing together all relevant actors to propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding based on the principle of national ownership; to provide recommendations and information to improve the coordination of all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations, including helping to ensure the funding necessary for those activities; and ensuring the necessary linkages between peacebuilding and peacekeeping activities.

Therefore, we consider today's Security Council meeting an opportunity to build momentum for peacebuilding activities through the Peacebuilding Commission, not through a contest between the Security Council and the General Assembly for control over the Commission, which could undermine the Commission's credibility. Accordingly, we request that the presidential statement to be issued by the Council on this topic include a clear and explicit mandate from the Council to the Peacebuilding Commission to study the best ways to overcome these three obstacles and any others that could prevent the Commission from carrying out its mission — a task that, as the Chairman of the Commission has just reaffirmed, that organ is prepared to accomplish as effectively as possible.

The proposal that the role of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General be enhanced so that they can carry out the work of the United Nations more effectively requires that we distinguish between two scenarios. First, if the country concerned is not included on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Security Council has the right to enhance the role of the Special Representative within a framework that guarantees respect for State sovereignty and the principle of national ownership. On the other hand, if the State concerned is included on the Commission's agenda, the Commission must, on a case-by-case basis, determine the roles to be played by the Special Representative and by each member of the steering committees in various countries, including the United Nations and other relevant influential actors, in particular donor countries and the international financial institutions.

With regard to the rapid deployment of qualified civilian experts specializing in police matters and the reform of the security and judicial sectors, it must first be agreed that each peacebuilding situation requires skills different from those required in other cases. This depends on the background of the conflict and the cultural, ethnic and religious background of the population, among other factors. Thus, it is impossible to determine what type of expertise is required unless the Peacebuilding Commission first identifies priorities and necessary areas for action, in consultation with the authorities of the State concerned. Moreover, it is possible that the building of such a framework could waste huge amounts of financial resources through the appointment of experts whom the United Nations does not need for long periods of time, but only on an ad hoc basis and under vastly different and substantive conditions. That would only place an additional and useless burden on the Organization's regular budget, which we are trying to keep under control.

On the other hand, while we agree with the concept paper on the need to provide rapid and flexible funding for activities aimed at achieving stability in a post-conflict situation, we believe that, given the inability of existing funding mechanisms to do so with the required effectiveness, the best way to accomplish this is to focus on quickly overcoming the defects hampering the work of the existing funding mechanisms and to reform them — particularly the Peacebuilding Fund — rather than thinking about creating new ones.

The experience of the Peacebuilding Fund since its establishment has underscored the urgent need to review its working methods and terms of reference. The General Assembly must do this through its review of the terms of reference, which is scheduled to take place two years after the August 2006 adoption of the terms, in accordance with the Assembly's mandate to provide general policy guidance on use of the Fund. In particular, we believe that the Peacebuilding Commission should participate in decision-making regarding the funding of projects that are peacebuilding priorities in the States under consideration. Thus, the process will not be limited to informing the Commission after the Secretary-General has made funding decisions. We also believe it is necessary to consider raising the ceiling of the Fund's budget — for example, doubling it to $750 million. That would make it possible to expand the base of projects to be funded upon the Commission's decision and to increase the number of recipient States. In that connection, we propose the holding of an annual meeting of the General Assembly dedicated to fund-raising, along the lines of the annual meeting held by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to enhance the financial capacities of the Central Emergency Response Fund.

Once again, I wish to thank you, Madam President, for this opportunity to focus on three major obstacles facing the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. We look forward to working with the Council, with the General Assembly and with our fellow members of the Commission to overcome those obstacles in order to benefit States emerging from conflict and to enhance and promote the Commission's authority to carry out its work in the way that we all hope it will.

The President: I thank the representative of Egypt for his considered statement. I am sure that we all reciprocate the offer to work constructively together.

I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh.

Ms. Jahan (Bangladesh): The Bangladesh delegation welcomes this opportunity to participate in this important open debate on post-conflict peacebuilding. We thank the delegation of the United Kingdom for having taken the initiative to organize this meeting.

While we align ourselves with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement caucus of the Peacebuilding Commission, we have taken the floor to underscore the following points.

Long after the guns have fallen silent, the scars of war continue to haunt the minds of the people as well as the economy of the country concerned. The first and foremost task of post-conflict peacebuilding, therefore, lies in expediting the healing process while, at the same time, creating the conditions necessary to prevent the situation from sliding back into conflict. In that context, the key focus should be on developing an integrated approach, with clear-cut commitments by the Government in question and the international community to broad-ranging interventions meant to restore peace and security, on the one hand, and to bring about economic growth and development, on the other. Needless to say, the country concerned should always play a leadership role in the process of consolidating peace if that peace is to be sustainable.

Analysis of conflict situations reveals that the twin phenomena of unemployment and conflict continued to feed each other in many cases. Empowerment, particularly of youth through education and employment, should be a key focus in preventing situations from sliding back. Furthermore, the overall experience in implementing resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, at all levels has been somewhat mixed.

While we have integrated a gender perspective in some aspects of United Nations peacekeeping operations, in post-conflict peacebuilding efforts much remains to be done. As one of the largest troop-contributing countries, Bangladesh is ever conscious of its responsibility to incorporate the essential elements of resolution 1325 (2000) in the predeployment training of peacekeepers. As a member of the Peacebuilding Commission we will continue remain vigilant in our focus on the provisions of the resolution.

Peacebuilding, being a holistic process, involves inter-agency cooperation across a wide range of issues. The main challenge lies in achieving the necessary coordination between agencies in post-conflict situations. Ownership, especially at the national level, and close coordination between United Nations and national actors and the international donor community are crucial. We would like to reiterate the NAM position that the Peacebuilding Commission should have the central role in post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation. The Commission should be equipped with the necessary resources for implementing its mandated functions effectively.

The concept of "Rapidly deployable and skilled civilian capacity" is being discussed in various forms in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations since 2005. The idea of civilian observers in the context of United Nations peacekeeping operations was floated in previous meetings of the Committee but it was not agreed upon for further consideration. Certain specific areas of multidimensional peacekeeping and peacebuilding — for example disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, rule of law and so on — warrant experts in their own fields. This expertise could be from both military and civilian backgrounds. Hence, we are not in favour of the creation of any type of cadre or pool comprising United Nations staff for rapid civilian deployment. The purpose can be served by filling the vacant posts in field missions and country offices with personnel recruited from Member States and host countries.

Some pertinent questions on this need much more clarification, the most important of which is the question of the relationship between such United Nations capacities and national capacities. We need to remind ourselves that national ownership of the peacebuilding process is a fundamental prerequisite. Any progress towards building such rapidly deployable capacity, therefore, should be thoroughly discussed in more inclusive forums, including the Peacebuilding Commission.

The question of leadership on the ground also requires careful thought and discussion. We underscore the necessity of close coordination among the Special Representative of the Secretary-General or the executive representative of the Secretary-General, the national Government and the Peacebuilding Commission. We also would like to emphasize that the extended role of the Special Representatives envisaged in the concept paper should in no way undermine the national ownership of the peacebuilding process.

We very much support the concept of a more rapid and flexible funding mechanism. Disbursements from the multi-donor trust funds and other funds should be rapid and immediate to ensure early stabilization of countries emerging from conflict. This is crucial in assisting the national and local authorities in delivering a peace dividend. However, we reiterate that one of the main purposes of the Peacebuilding Commission, as described in General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Council resolution 1645 (2005), is to marshal resources for reconstruction and institution-building in countries emerging from conflict. Therefore, the Peacebuilding Commission should have a central role in any discussion regarding the creation of a new rapid funding mechanism.

Many of the issues and ideas raised in the concept paper before us have for some time been discussed in the Peacebuilding Commission. We believe that the proposals advanced by the concept paper would benefit from further analysis within the Commission itself, which, as an intergovernmental advisory body, is I believe competent to do so. Consultations among the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on these issues are also necessary. We would underscore that these consultations should be inclusive and exhaustive to ensure a practical outcome with pragmatic recommendations.

Finally, our experience in dealing with the country-specific situations in the Peacebuilding Commission strengthens our conviction that the post-conflict peacebuilding process requires the involvement of all the stakeholders: the Government; the Peacebuilding Commission's full membership; potential donors; the United Nations country team; financial institutions; non-governmental organizations; civil society; and the private sector. It would also require the continued support of the Security Council.

The President: Thank you very much for that thoughtful statement. I think we all share the emphasis on inclusivity.

I now give the floor to the representative of Slovenia.

Ms. Štiglic (Slovenia): I have the honour to address the Security Council on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this declaration.

In the interests of time, the EU will deliver an abbreviated statement. The complete and official statement is being distributed in the Council Chamber.

The European Union welcomes this debate on post-conflict peacebuilding and agrees that there are critical gaps in terms of leadership, civilian capability and speed and flexibility of funding. The European Union is committed to continue enhancing its own capacities to address these gaps through its various sources and to continue working with others, not least the United Nations, to that end.

Efficient response to peacebuilding challenges in a post-conflict country largely depends on the capacity of the international community to come together behind a nationally owned common strategy in a coordinated and integrated way, cutting across the political, security and development fields, including in the immediate post-conflict phase.

The European Union has been working to develop its role in this area over the past few years, based on its ability to draw on a broad range of security and development instruments and its widespread geographic presence. The recent period has seen both the strengthening of each set of tools and efforts to improve their coordination. Particular attention is being paid to integrating political, security and development concerns in the European Union's overall approach.

Areas of support in which this integration is the most visible include security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, with attention to the security-development nexus. For example, an integrated approach to security sector reform is being put in practice by the EU in Guinea Bissau, where all aspects of the reform, civilian and military, are being addressed by the available EU instruments.

The European Union underscores also the impact of climate change, which can significantly increase instability in fragile States by overstretching the already limited capacity of Governments to respond effectively to the challenges they face. The European Union also underlines the importance of effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, recognizing the vital role of the active participation of women at all levels in post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding.

The European Union firmly believes that adherence to the rule of law is critical to conflict prevention, stabilization of fragile and conflict-affected environments and sustainable long-term development. Peace and justice are not conflicting goals. The European Union strongly supports the International Criminal Court and its activities and remains convinced that there can be no sustainable peace without justice.

The European Union underlines the importance of the international community coming together behind a common strategy as often as possible. When dealing with an immediate post-conflict phase, the international community needs to have a common strategy and a common understanding of what the needs are — what needs to be done, when and by whom — both at the international level and on the ground. In both cases there is a need to identify leadership or agree upon a division of labour. At the international level, the key is coordination of action. On the ground, that agreement should materialize through cooperation by actors in order to consolidate action and achieve results.

The European Union recognizes the importance of leadership on the ground and deploys EU special representatives who, together with the network of European Commission delegations in the field, work closely with the Secretary-General's special representatives and their staff in the field. As part of the EU crisis response toolbox, European Community tools were also upgraded to allow for more rapid and flexible funding of crisis response programmes.

The European Union agrees that effective cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is essential. We recognize the important role of the United Nations in integrating political, security and development approaches in stabilization and recovery contexts. In many instances, post-conflict stabilization assistance provided under EU instruments is implemented in support of United Nations operations or even channelled through United Nations mechanisms. That cooperation must be pursued.

The European Union remains committed to the strengthening of United Nations crisis management capacities, including on the basis of the joint statement on EU-United Nations cooperation in crisis management. That will continue to be a priority for the EU. In particular, there is scope for increased EU/United Nations cooperation in support of the efforts of the African Union and African subregional organizations in establishing the African peace and security architecture. In that regard, the joint Africa/EU strategy and its first action plan provide a solid base for future developments.

The European Union remains committed to playing an active role in supporting the peacebuilding efforts of the United Nations. In that regard, we recognize that the Peacebuilding Commission is a valuable international instrument that can help post-conflict States to overcome challenges to sustainable peace. We commend the work of the Peacebuilding Commission to date in promoting peace in Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. We hope that the Commission will incrementally be able to consider countries that are more immediately post-conflict.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the presidency of the Security Council for convening this constructive debate. Let me reaffirm that it is a priority for the European Union to continue to provide its expertise and resources to post-conflict peacebuilding around the world as a partner of the United Nations.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Matussek (Germany): First of all, we would like to commend the United Kingdom for convening this timely and useful debate on enhancing the international community's ability to respond to the challenges of peacebuilding in the immediate post-conflict phase.

The United Nations and regional organizations, as well as individual Member States, have to address the challenges of immediate post-conflict situations in their complex and multifaceted nature. Germany stresses the increasing role and capacities of the European Union (EU) in that field and associates itself the statement of the EU Presidency today.

In order to achieve lasting peace and take the first steps in reconstruction, we need to rebalance our approach to immediate post-conflict interventions. Political mediation efforts and military peacekeeping operations alone are not enough to achieve lasting stabilization; rather, the root causes of conflicts need to be addressed at the earliest possible stage, in a pragmatic and step-by-step approach. In concrete terms, the military side of peacekeeping needs to be more and better complemented by civilian capacities geared towards a set of priority goals — inter alia, in the fields of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, security sector reform, the rule of law and justice, as well as quick-impact projects, opening up clear perspectives of a peace dividend for the population.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to post-conflict stabilization. On the contrary, specific answers and strategies have to be identified, targeting the root causes of each individual conflict. That is why the international community has to build up expertise and capacities in a wide range of areas in order to respond adequately to the various challenges. We welcome initiatives at the international level, within the EU and by Member States to strengthen those critical capabilities and provide civilian tools for post-conflict stabilization.

We should strive to improve the exchange of information and, wherever possible, to define common criteria and norms — for instance in the field of recruitment, as well as deployment.

The United Nations is the main global actor in the international peace architecture and therefore must play a leading role. The groundbreaking Brahimi report (S/2000/809) led to substantial improvements in the functioning of the overall system. Through the establishment of integrated and multidimensional missions, United Nations peacekeeping operations have started to address key issues of immediate post-conflict situations. In that context, Germany welcomes the new principles and guidelines document distributed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which duly reflects the multidimensional character of today's peacekeeping operations.

Germany would also like to underscore its continued support for the Peacebuilding Commission. It has developed innovative participatory working methods, and it is also beginning to build up unique experience in the area of post-conflict stabilization in its country-specific formats.

We should like to underscore respect for the principle of ownership by the partner country. Building up local capacities must be a central and integral part of our efforts, as we believe that early national ownership of the peacebuilding process is indispensable to achieve positive and lasting results.

The United Nations has also gained increasing experience in building partnerships in concrete operations with regional organizations like the EU, the African Union and the NATO alliance. Germany supports a cooperative approach that combines the value added of each and every actor. In our coordination efforts, we should realistically assess the capacities of the different institutions and actors. We should pragmatically join forces in a spirit of constructive cooperation and coordination, rather than competition. Our endeavours within and outside the United Nations system should be guided not by principled debate but by the capacity to deliver on the ground.

The United Nations system needs to increase coherence in its approach and rapidity in its responses, on the political as well as on the operational level. Those are the foundations for a leading coordinating role in international efforts in peacekeeping and early post-conflict activities. Germany would welcome a broad discussion of possible concrete mechanisms and different options to that end.

In 2004, the Federal Government adopted the action plan entitled "Civilian crisis prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding". The action plan aims to integrate all available crisis-prevention instruments in a unified policy approach for more effective crisis prevention on the national and international levels. We are developing three key instruments within that framework.

First, we are striving to enhance our police capacity for international missions in the framework of the Civilian Headline Goal of the EU's civil crisis management and on the national level. Currently, Germany employs 248 police personnel in international police missions. Germany is also providing training for police officers at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Centre in Accra.

Secondly, we established the Centre for International Peace Operations, which aims to enhance Germany's civilian crisis prevention and peacekeeping capacities. A key element of the Centre's mandate is the selection and promotion of German civilian personnel for peace operations of the United Nations, the EU and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, as well as other multilateral bodies. Since 2003 the Centre has maintained a national standby roster of about 1,100 experienced and trained experts. Currently, about 110 German civilian experts serve with United Nations peacekeeping and political field missions.

Thirdly, we have developed the Federal Agency for Technical Relief, which is currently participating in emergency relief operations and missions in 75 countries around the world. During the last few years, the Agency has become increasingly active in United Nations peacekeeping missions in, inter alia, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

A lot needs to be done and today's debate is a very welcome step in that direction.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to start by thanking the President for convening this important open debate on peacebuilding in societies emerging from prolonged internal conflict.

We concur with the concept paper prepared for this occasion to the effect that the first six to twelve weeks following the signing of a ceasefire or peace agreement are crucial for internal stability.

In this critical phase, the international community has a vital role to play. The United Nations system must provide integrated, coherent and efficient support in this first stage in order to establish the basic minimum required for medium- and short-term peacebuilding.

However, we have observed that, in some cases, the response from the multilateral system, including the United Nations and other international organizations and entities, tends to encounter two great obstacles in the field that create impediments to properly tackling the challenges of peacebuilding. I am referring to the lack of coordination and, often, the inefficacy of aid.

Generally, once a ceasefire or peace agreement has been signed, the international community reacts enthusiastically by providing various types of cooperation and aid to the society emerging from conflict without waiting for a body or institution to adequately channel this initial enthusiasm. This lack of coordination augments the duplication of functions. In some cases, it further complicates subsequent efforts at medium- and long-term peacebuilding.

An integrated office endowed with ample authority to address all aspects linked to peacebuilding following a ceasefire, including peacekeeping activities and activities related to development and the strengthening of the rule of law, would, in Chile's view, facilitate an integrated approach that allows for the creation of national capacities from the start and the creation of a rational process of medium- and long-term peacebuilding.

We believe that an integrated approach would facilitate coordination, and it is here that the Peacebuilding Commission plays a decisive role. In almost two years of operation, the Commission has demonstrated the advantages of collectively examining the aspects of security with matters connected to development and rule of law in societies emerging from conflict. We should take advantage of the experience acquired by the Peacebuilding Commission and not repeat the mistakes of the past.

Another problem that emerges in the weeks following a ceasefire or peace agreement is that a large quantity of aid begins to arrive at a time when the capacity to absorb it adequately in the field is insufficient. Then, when an assistance network is finally in place to channel the aid, the media have usually left and the flow of aid decreases drastically.

In order to circumvent this paradox, we should be capable of acting swiftly in areas identified as priorities in the first stage of peacebuilding. Here, again, the activity of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund can play a crucial role by providing rapid aid through coordinated quick-impact projects and by collaborating with the national Government to identify its priorities.

The Fund should not, however, be seen as just another source of funding for development. I would like to conclude my statement by making a call for us to consider the Peacebuilding Commission as the organ that can respond to the majority of questions and difficulties in post-conflict societies. The Commission has the appropriate tools and mandate, and we should feel confident that its integrated approach can face these challenges, alongside the States involved and from the perspective of so-called national ownership.

Ms. Banks (New Zealand): New Zealand commends the United Kingdom for initiating this debate and for its useful concept paper entitled "Post-Conflict Stabilization: Peace After War".

We see post-conflict peacebuilding as a critical area of focus for the international community. It is an immediate practical issue, and there are valuable lessons to be learned from our recent experience, as Mr. Brahimi reminded us this morning.

New Zealand is looking to improve its capacity for post-conflict stabilization while simultaneously "learning by doing" in several missions that run in parallel: State-building in the Solomon Islands in an Australian-led regional operation, in Timor-Leste in a United Nations mission alongside a regional operation, and through our participation in the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.

We are keenly aware of the need for the international community to improve its approach to peacebuilding in general and to post-conflict stabilization in particular. A military intervention may be necessary in the first instance to stabilize a situation. But, as many have noted here, for the resolution of conflict to be sustainable, we need more wide-ranging interventions to deal with the causes of State failure and initiatives to build both capacity and social services. Those interventions must be coherent, coordinated, and have local ownership. Increasingly, we must be prepared to commit a wider range of Government agencies to complex, multifaceted peacebuilding interventions ranging from the justice system to border control.

United Nations integrated missions have made considerable progress in addressing these challenges. But we do share the concern of the United Kingdom and others that, overall, our international efforts remain too fragmented, too ad hoc and often too fleeting.

Therefore, New Zealand supports the idea of a gap analysis. The United Kingdom has identified at least three critical gaps in post-conflict stabilization process: leadership on the ground, rapidly deployable and skilled civilian capacity, and more rapid and flexible funding.

There are no easy answers to the associated questions in the United Kingdom paper but there are some important points. First, it notes that the United Nations can make a significant contribution to the developing body of international theory and practical learning on post-conflict peacebuilding. In the United Nations context, the Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Fund are, of course, central to this discussion.

Coherence with non-United Nations actors is vital. There is a need for coordination of and a clear division of labour among the numerous multilateral agencies involved in peacebuilding. Even in classic United Nations-led interventions, the United Kingdom identifies a broad range of non-United Nations and often non-State actors.

Finally, within the broader context of building deployable civilian capacity, we agree with the identification of police advisers as a critical dimension of the international effort. Developing the capacity for credible, effective policing is essential to underpinning post-conflict transition. A range of recent examples demonstrate the challenges of building police capacity, particularly relative to building military capacity.

Allow me to conclude by stressing New Zealand's continuing commitment to contributing to United Nations led, mandated and authorized peace operations. They are tangible expressions of our collective responsibility to serve fragile post-conflict States, which most need the assistance of the international community.

The President: I thank the representative of New Zealand for her very helpful statement and ongoing commitment.

I now have the pleasure to give the floor to the representative of Ghana.

Mr. Christian (Ghana): I wish to join others in congratulating the delegation of the United Kingdom on its assumption of the Presidency for the month of May and commend its initiative in organizing this open debate on post-conflict peacebuilding. The objectives of this debate, as stated in the concept paper, are to identify and address some of the critical gaps in international efforts to help post-conflict countries to stabilize and build sustainable peace as they emerge from conflict.

The letter and spirit of the founding resolutions, adopted by the General Assembly (resolution 60/180) and the Security Council (resolution 1645 (2005)), charge the Peacebuilding Commission, a subsidiary body of these two principal organs of the United Nations, with the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The founding resolutions also mandate the Commission's pivotal and unique role in mobilizing sustained international attention and engagement to help countries recently emerging from conflict to face the formidable challenges in achieving durable stability and sustainable peace. It has long been recognized that sustained international engagement and a strong national commitment are vital ingredients for success in any post-conflict peacebuilding endeavour.

The critical gaps already alluded to in the concept paper are very germane to our discussion. These include the gaps in leadership on the ground, defined as the lack of effective coordination among the various stakeholders in post-conflict countries, be they governments and other institutions of national governance; the United Nations agencies; civil societies; the international financial institutions; bilateral donors or the private sector. Also the need for skilled and rapidly deployable civilian capacity, coupled with rapidly deployable military contingents, cannot be overemphasized. Of course, the absence of adequate funding and of the mechanisms for swift disbursement and allocation of the limited but available financial and other material resources remains a formidable challenge to post-conflicting stabilization and peacebuilding.

Often, the gaps in the implementation of peacebuilding strategies or framework are inherent in the terms of the peace agreements negotiated as a basis for the peace process. A hastily negotiated agreement, perceived to have been imposed on the parties to a conflict lacks the desired long-term commitment needed to make it durable.

Equally important, and not to be overlooked, are the conceptual and operational questions regarding the appropriate relationship between the Peacebuilding Commission and other United Nations organs, as well as between the Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund, which, together with the Peacebuilding Support Office, constitute the peacebuilding architecture of the United Nations.

As clearly articulated in its founding resolutions, the Peacebuilding Commission serves as an international advisory body designed to play advocacy, mobilizing and coordinating roles for the benefit of the international community by offering assistance to countries emerging from violent conflicts. We must accept that the Commission has been uniquely and carefully crafted to ensure a holistic approach to peacebuilding, in a manner that recognizes the interdependence of political rehabilitation, socio-economic revival and sustainable peace.

To promote the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Peacebuilding Commission in carrying out all aspects of its mandate and mission, such conceptual, knowledge or informational gaps, which usually are not openly articulated, should be addressed.

While the founding resolutions may have rightly emphasized the principle of national ownership, the fact remains that these founding resolutions also acknowledge the need for the Peacebuilding Commission to work closely with regional organizations, as many conflicts have triggered instability in neighbouring States and regions.

Surely, when it comes to regional organizations, the Commission can learn from the experiences and lessons of the Security Council, which has, of late, given priority to forging closer partnerships and cooperation with regional organizations, in particular the African Union, when dealing with countries on the Council's agenda. Growing efforts are being made by the Commission to bridge the critical gap in regional engagement or regional ownership, as reflected in the recent interactions between the Peacebuilding Support Office and Commission on the one hand, and the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council on the other in Addis Ababa and New York to exchange views on ways to forge closer cooperation and partnerships in dealing with countries currently on the Commission's agenda, all of which currently happen to be African countries.

But such regional engagement should be reflected at the working level in the field by ensuring a more active involvement of regional and subregional organizations in integrated peacebuilding strategies and in steering committees set up to address post-conflict recovery. In this context, peacebuilding efforts in post-conflict countries in Africa should pay due attention to the AU Framework for Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development, which places emphasis on tackling the root causes of the conflict to ensure sustainable peace. The international community should more actively support regional and subregional initiatives aimed at expediting the reaction time to crises when they occur.

The need to address the financial resource gap cannot be overemphasized. The establishment of the Peacebuilding Fund as a form of trust fund available for speedy disbursement and quick impact projects, especially in the immediate post-conflict phase, is essential for ensuring sustainable peace. That is why the Peacebuilding Commission should continue to contribute to the Secretary-General's efforts to mobilize resources to increase the level of funds in the Fund.

The capacity gap is a critical gap that has received increased attention. The shortage of national human resources to help rebuild post-conflict countries may be addressed through the promotion of the return of the critical mass of skilled and unskilled citizens, who flee the conflict zone when civil war breaks out. Psychological damage can take much longer to overcome than material damage.

Affected and victimized populations are reluctant to return to their homeland for fear of a relapse to violent conflict and have limited confidence in the peace processes. Some may seek vengeance or revenge. More attention should therefore be given to integrating the diaspora as indispensable stakeholders in post-conflict peacebuilding processes. Addressing such obstacles to the consolidation of peace in post-conflict countries should also include a commitment to mechanisms for transitional and criminal justice and national reconciliation.

In closing, the truth is that too often political will or goodwill are lacking. Where there is political will underpinned by good faith and good will there is a way. Political will should underpin our collective will to bridge the implementation gaps when decisions are taken.

Conflicts often assume very complex and complicated dimensions once they occur and may not necessarily fall into any neat categories of critical gaps identified by various speakers today. Thus, the Peacebuilding Commission, the other United Nations organs, including the Council, national authorities and regional organizations involved in issues of peace and security, should understand the value of preventive diplomacy on the basis of article 1 of the United Nations Charter, both in countries experiencing conflicts and in those witnessing peace, in order to save succeeding generations, including our generation, from the ravages of war.

The President: I thank the representative of Ghana for that very comprehensive and considered intervention.

I now have the pleasure to give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would first like to thank the United Kingdom for having the initiative to hold this open debate on such a relevant and complex topic within the realm of international relations and the maintenance of international peace and security, namely the consolidation of peace in countries emerging from conflict.

Although efforts to avoid the recurrence of conflict in some countries emerging from violence continue to be insufficient, the international community has now adopted new and improved tools to identify the fundamental issues that must be addressed once armed conflict has ceased.

My delegation believes that it is crucial that the international community take coordinated, urgent and effective measures in the weeks immediately following the cessation of hostilities, taking advantage of the momentum created by the signing of peace agreements, in the knowledge that this is a phase in which all concerned actors show sufficient political will to implement the agreed commitments.

The United Nations must play a pivotal role in the coordination of efforts to re-establish stability and the rule of law, through the innovative tools that make up the Organization's new peacebuilding architecture.

The priorities upon which national and international efforts must focus must be immediately identified through the articulation of an integrated strategy that addresses the issues of security, justice, reconstruction and development.

Determining the priorities that must be addressed by the United Nations system and its national and international partners is a very complex exercise. Every issue is a priority, and each national context is unique. It is therefore crucial that the national Government concerned define such priorities while ensuring national ownership of the process. The priorities identified by the Government and supported by the Organization should have as a first goal the stabilization of the country and the creation of the conditions necessary for its recovery, with the support of all concerned actors. Ensuring peace dividends for the local population should be a top concern when deciding such priorities.

In the same vein, in the formulation of strategies and action plans, programmes and policies should aim at including gender equality and justice in the process of peacebuilding, recovery and reconstruction. Women's role as the centre of the family and society must be highlighted from the very beginning of the process.

Mexico believes that the creation of solid foundations for the sustainable development of the country receiving assistance should also be a goal of utmost importance. The country's self-sufficiency will greatly depend on such foundations. In that sense, Mexico gives special priority to international cooperation, primarily that of developed countries, and to economic support from international financial institutions and regional and subregional organizations.

My delegation notes that security sector reform is a vital component in any integrated post-conflict strategy and recognizes its importance in assuring the transition from peacekeeping to long-term reconstruction, stabilization and development. We therefore believe that special attention should be given, beginning in the early phases of the process, to security sector reform and that it should include a transitional judicial system that strengthens the rule of law and promotes the protection of human rights and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants.

We welcome the fact that the mandates of some peacekeeping missions already include security sector reform and highlight the increasingly relevant role of their civilian components. Moreover, three missions already have support units to address the issue: the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste, the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. For those reasons, my delegation considers it important that security sector reform coordination mechanisms be established among the various entities of the United Nations system, both at Headquarters and in the field, in the framework of peacekeeping operations and in post-conflict situations. My delegation would like to particularly emphasize the necessity of enhancing the Peacebuilding Commission's competencies in that area.

Mexico believes that Member States and the Organization should focus efforts and resources on supporting the existing structures of the still-young peacebuilding architecture. Mexico acknowledges the work undertaken in that area by the Peacebuilding Commission and its country-specific configurations, which have proved to be inclusive forums for discussion and effective agreements on the formulation of integrated strategies to confront the enormous challenges faced by the countries on its agenda.

Although Mexico is not a member of the Organizational Committee, my Government has decided to participate in the Guinea-Bissau country-specific configuration, in order to contribute to multilateral efforts to achieve stabilization, self-sufficiency and sustainable development in that country. Mexico is ready to share its experience in such fields as combating drug trafficking, social development, electoral processes, institution-building, the promotion of a culture of peace and civic education, which are fundamental issues in countries emerging from conflict.

In the same vein, in 2007, Mexico contributed to the Peacebuilding Fund, thus reaffirming once again its commitment to the United Nations institutions responsible for promoting and strengthening peacebuilding processes. We encourage the Peacebuilding Commission to continue to make progress and we assure it of the complete support of the Government of Mexico.

The President: I thank the representative of Mexico for his statement and for highlighting security sector reform and his country's engagement.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Switzerland.

Mr. Maurer (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank you, Madam President, for organizing this debate. Allow me to stress three points on the subject of peacebuilding that are important for Switzerland.

First, we share the analysis that the funding of early recovery activities would benefit from strategic reflection at the highest level and should be dealt with in the context of the peacebuilding architecture as a whole. The experiences of past years clearly show that considerable gaps between promises and the actual disbursement of funds exist; that allocation criteria are inadequate; and that there are multiple funds whose governance remains fragmented. The goal is thus obvious. We should have more coherent financial structures that would be able to respond to humanitarian allocation criteria, that is, that are flexible, rapid and realistic in terms of risk. At the same time, such funds must have the predictability and the critical mass of development funds.

Secondly, the roles of the United Nations country teams and of the mission leadership on the ground are crucial. The complexity of tasks and of mandates requires that the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and their teams possess a wealth of knowledge and professional skills. We could consider a standard quartet of excellence for complex missions, made up of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General and deputies for the role of resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator, for civil affairs and for military operations.

Moreover, it is in the best interests of Member States that the Security Council not create parallel institutional structures and that it ensure that the lines of command and of decision-making are always clearly defined.

Thirdly, civilian personnel play a critical and increasingly important role in recovery efforts within United Nations missions. My country will continue to provide expertise in various areas to the United Nations, both by providing training and by seconding experts on the ground. At the national level, there are numerous pools of civilian peacebuilding experts in a variety of areas. However, there is still a lack of the relevant instruments within the Secretariat, and that prevents a systematic and coherent deployment of such experts.

The Secretary-General must therefore strengthen the capacities of the system and optimize collaboration among the United Nations, the World Bank and existing national structures. Moreover, the rosters within the United Nations system in various areas of competence are important resources that could be exploited more systematically and could thus improve selection procedures.

Continued concerted efforts aiming at enhancing the quality of international support in the area of early recovery efforts and peacebuilding are both welcome and necessary. I hope that this discussion will be pursued in all of the appropriate forums.

The President: I thank the representative of Switzerland for his thoughtful statement.

I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mr. Tarragô (Brazil): I would like to thank the United Kingdom presidency of the Security Council for the initiative of organizing this open debate on the major challenges facing post-conflict countries.

The United Nations system has greatly contributed to efforts aiming at stabilization and reconstruction in post-conflict countries. The international response to post-conflict situations has been evolving. Its continued improvement is a task for all of us. We concur with the analysis that better coherence among actors on the ground, with a strong leadership role by the United Nations system, and an early, flexible and expedient mechanism for mobilizing resources in the immediate aftermath of conflicts are key.

The recurrent outbreak of conflict is a symptom of fundamental tensions in a country, but peacebuilding efforts should not only aim at alleviating the symptoms; it is necessary to dive deep into the root causes of conflicts and to engage in a holistic treatment. It is important to work simultaneously on the three pillars that sustain the building of peace: strengthening political institutions, providing security and promoting economic reconstruction. Breaches in any of those pillars will impair the foundations of long-lasting peace.

Brazil has long advocated the need to integrate a development component into peacekeeping operations. The road from keeping to building peace should be seen as a continuum along which the seeds of a long-lasting peace must be spread in tandem with the provision of prompt and concrete peace dividends to the population.

Our experience in peacekeeping operations in Haiti and Timor-Leste and, more recently, in coordinating peacebuilding efforts in Guinea-Bissau have reinforced our conviction of the correctness of such an integrated approach. In the case of Haiti, we have seen how useful quick impact projects are to the operation of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and for changing the mindset of the population. Brazil strongly supports a significant increase in budgetary resources allocated to projects of that nature. At the same time, it is imperative to step up efforts to support the Government in implementing programmes that can generate employment and income. That is the surest path to the reactivation of the economy, which in turn will provide the State apparatus with the necessary capacity to address the basic needs of the population.

Brazil endorses proposals aimed at devising an emergency budgetary window to deal with unforeseen developments in post-conflict countries. We should not allow unexpected events — such as the recent increase in food and fuel prices — to undermine peace and stability.

In the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, we are following a two-track approach aimed at combining measures with short-term impact with a strategic assessment of the key priorities for the consolidation of peace in that country.

A common trait of post-conflict countries is the institutional fragility of the State, which constrains its capacity to effectively manage public policies. There seems to be a vicious circle in which the absence of response to the most elementary needs of the population sets the conditions for political instability, which in turn further enhances the vulnerability of the already fragile State.

The Peacebuilding Commission, standing at the very heart of the international peacebuilding architecture, is particularly well suited to help turn such a vicious circle into a virtuous one of political stability and economic prosperity. Although still a relatively new body in the United Nations system, the Peacebuilding Commission is proving to add value in the three countries under its consideration. It has been instrumental in assisting local Governments in developing the necessary capacity to tread their own path to recovery and stability, in line with the principle of national ownership.

Following its multifold mandate and relying on the elaboration of integrated strategies, the Commission has also been useful in marshalling resources and galvanizing all relevant stakeholders into concerted action. It has encouraged greater coordination among United Nations bodies and agencies. The focus on the countries on its agenda has helped to strengthen the presence of the United Nations on the ground.

The Peacebuilding Fund has also been playing a very important role in providing catalytic money in areas identified by the Commission. By doing so, the Fund leads by example and prompts other donors to invest in key priority areas for the consolidation of peace. Ongoing efforts to strengthen the relationship between the Fund and the Commission are much welcome and deserve to be further enhanced.

We do hope that the Peacebuilding Commission can continue to grow and evolve over time, take up new countries on its agenda, and further consolidate its niche as an important body to deal with the complex challenges faced by post-conflict countries.

The President: I call on the representative of Jamaica.

Mr. Wolfe (Jamaica): May I at the very outset express my appreciation to the United Kingdom for the very timely initiative of organizing this very important debate on post-conflict peacebuilding.

I have the honour and pleasure to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

During the relatively short time of its existence, the Peacebuilding Commission has worked diligently towards fulfilling its mandate of addressing the special needs of the countries on its agenda, working specifically towards their rehabilitation, recovery and reconstruction with the clear aim of creating the foundation for sustainable development, as stipulated by its founding resolutions: General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005).

The underlying feature of the Peacebuilding Commission's sustained engagement with the countries on its agenda has been to strengthen State capacity by ensuring national ownership of the peacebuilding process through the inclusion of a wide cross section of key players in the decision-making process, particularly as it relates to the identification of priorities and the recommendation of strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding.

Our focus after virtually two years of the Commission's existence is on further bolstering its effectiveness and capabilities to better fulfil its mandate as the lead player in peace consolidation and on ensuring that the wide network of actors involved can operate effectively, efficiently and coherently in building legitimate national ownership and in establishing and strengthening capacity where necessary, while maintaining sustained international attention on the countries on its agenda.

In that regard, the Non-Aligned Movement stresses the central role of the Peacebuilding Commission as the dedicated institutional mechanism to address the special needs of countries emerging from conflict towards recovery, security and sustainable development through a coordinated and integrated approach to post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation.

A close scrutiny of the concept paper presented as the basis for these discussions reveals certain fundamental questions, the most critical of which are: What do such civilian capacities encompass? How do such capacities differ from already existing international capacity, especially the relationship between such capacities and national capacities, the improvement of which must remain the central objective of all peace consolidation efforts? Furthermore, will the utilization of such capacities come at the expense of other elements of the development agenda? Following upon this, the Movement hopes to see more detailed, inclusive and wide-ranging discussions on how such civilian capacities are to be organized, financed and deployed and on the nature and extent of the role of the United Nations in that regard.

Additionally, the concept paper seems, in our view, to be based on a similar document under discussion in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, on enhanced rapidly deployable capacity. In that regard, NAM believes that clarification as to the nature of the relationship between the two documents would be appreciated.

The Non-Aligned Movement remains of the view that the leadership and the coordinating role of the Peacebuilding Commission are critical components of the peacebuilding architecture and the spearhead for a coordinated, coherent and integrated approach to post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation, as underpinned by the founding resolutions. The lead role of the Commission in post-conflict situations is becoming even more crucial, particularly against the backdrop of the dire situation being faced by countries emerging from conflict, including critical humanitarian and socio-economic challenges such as the high levels of debt burden and severe fiscal constraints, which require the provision of medium- to long-term resources in order to strengthen the foundations for security and stability countries emerging from conflict.

The issues raised by the concept paper — leadership on the ground, the need for a rapidly deployable and skilled civilian capacity and more rapid and flexible funding — are already being considered by the Peacebuilding Commission, especially in its country-specific configurations, and should therefore continue to be subjects for discussion and analysis, in accordance with the Commission's mandate. Advice and recommendations on these and other conceptual issues should thus be provided by the Commission.

Furthermore, in addition to the discussions within the Peacebuilding Commission, the Non-Aligned Movement is of the view that consultations among the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on the issues raised by the paper can unearth practical workable results and pragmatic recommendations in an integrated and holistic manner. Given the role of the Peacebuilding Commission as an intergovernmental advisory body, the Movement considers it appropriate — and indeed necessary — that any advice required for the consideration of these issues be sought from the Commission.

The Movement remains convinced that the appropriate forum for addressing matters relating to building peace in post-conflict situations is the Peacebuilding Commission. In that regard, and taking into account the equal stake of the principal organs of the United Nations in the long-term success and viability of the Commission, robust efforts to craft additional comprehensive yet flexible measures to consolidate peace in post-conflict societies should be based on the fullest utilization of the capabilities of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The President: I thank the representative of Jamaica for that very important statement, which included with a number of significant areas for follow-up. We agree with the emphasis on bringing in the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission to address these questions.

I should just like to assure delegations that there is no intention, either in the concept paper or beyond it, to deviate or detract from funding for development. What is proposed would be additional to existing measures, in order to help address some of the questions that the representative raised about post-conflict situations.

I now call on the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): First of all, I wish to congratulate the United Kingdom on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the current month and the delegation of South Africa on an excellent presidency last month.

Madam President, we welcome this open debate initiated by your Government on an important subject. We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Post-conflict peacebuilding is crucial for establishing peace and sustainable development in war-torn countries. Together with conflict prevention and peacekeeping, peacebuilding must be part of a comprehensive response to complex crises. While that concept is well recognized, the challenge is to fully operationalize it in post-conflict stabilization efforts, to ensure coherence and synergy between peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities from the very outset of the engagement of the United Nations, and thus to ensure a smooth transition from peacekeeping to conditions of self-sustaining peace and development.

To ensure such synergy and effective peacebuilding, the 2005 World Summit recognized the need for a dedicated institutional mechanism. That led to the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission. Together with the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund, the Commission is now the central instrument for peacebuilding activities. The unique structure and composition of the Commission was conceived to bring together "all relevant actors to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery" (*resolution 1645 (2005), para. 2 (a)*).

Indeed, several issues reflected in the presidency's concept paper for this debate (S/2008/291, annex) — for example, the need to address the critical gaps in peacebuilding — constituted the basic rationale for the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission and are indeed part of its mandate. As the Non-Aligned Movement and others have pointed out, several of those issues are being discussed by the Commission in its various formats. We endorse the view that all efforts, including this debate, should aim at strengthening the role and the mandate of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The coherence and integration of peacebuilding activities and the provision of timely, adequate and sustained funding are objectives that can best be promoted by the Commission, since all major stakeholders and partners are represented there. However, in order to ensure that that task is conducted effectively, the international community needs to develop a common strategic vision of peacebuilding.

That requires, first, greater convergence between the perspectives of the partners and those of the host countries, based primarily on the priorities and policies of the latter: national ownership and leadership are key for the success of peacebuilding. Secondly, all actors should demonstrate genuine political will and flexibility to ensure effective peacebuilding. Thirdly, in order to ensure a comprehensive approach, the Peacebuilding Commission must be involved in peacebuilding from the initial phases. The Security Council should, we believe, make use of paragraph 16 of Council resolution 1645 (2005) and General Assembly resolution 60/180 to seek the Commission's advice in situations where peacekeeping missions are still deployed. Empowerment of the Secretary-General's Special Representatives to lead and coordinate peacekeeping and peacebuilding is, of course, desirable. However, this should not supplant, but rather supplement, the authority and the role of host countries.

There is, no doubt, a requirement for adequate civilian expertise, particularly to support rule-of-law activities. Such capacity is already being provided by the United Nations in integrated missions. We also support the Standing Police Capacity. However, the concept of "rapidly deployable civilian capacities", in large numbers and as a standing structure or mechanism, needs further clarification with regard to its objectives and scope, its actual requirements and its possible implications. A somewhat similar proposal — to establish a civilian cadre of 2,500 personnel — was made earlier by the Secretary-General. It became the object of numerous and legitimate questions and concerns.

It should also be noted that civilian capacities with relevant experience and perspectives are normally available in the host countries and among their diasporas, which can and should be harnessed and utilized. Mr. Brahimi's comments this morning were very pertinent in that regard. The objective should be the durable development of national capacities, not steps to replace them. These are conclusions that we derive from the Peacebuilding Commission's discussions relating to the countries on its agenda.

The identification of gaps is a key step in formulating and implementing successful strategies. That should be done not piecemeal but through an objective and comprehensive diagnosis of the situation. Experience has shown that the biggest and most ominous gap in peacekeeping and peacebuilding strategies is the failure to comprehend and address the root causes of conflicts. In particular, the issues of poverty and unemployment and the imperative of socio-economic development have remained largely neglected in plans and strategies.

Post-conflict challenges in several countries are likely to become further exacerbated by the current global food crisis. That was mentioned in the Peacebuilding Commission's discussion on Sierra Leone yesterday. We still lack a strategy that would enable countries emerging from conflict to stand on their own feet to achieve self-sustained peace and development. Many promises of aid remain unfulfilled. Often the benefit and effectiveness of such aid is open to question, a point raised by others and by Mr. Brahimi in this discussion.

One conclusion seems to be that such aid is best channelled through the budgets of the host Governments. On the other hand, many countries afflicted by complex conflicts continue to be deprived of revenues and earnings from their own resources, due to unequal trade regimes, industrial country agricultural subsidies, an inability to process their raw materials and so forth. One example is again Sierra Leone. Insufficient attention has been accorded to national and international mechanisms to halt the illegal exploitation of the natural resources of these countries or, indeed, to enable the countries concerned to make full use of those resources for the benefit of their own peoples.

Thus, a fuller perspective of the peacebuilding challenges and the formulation of adequate response strategies are essential to achieve sustainable peace and development. Such a comprehensive approach can be best pursued through an inclusive and participatory process. The Pakistan delegation expects and hopes that the potential of the Peacebuilding Commission will be fully utilized to this end by all Member States, including by the members of the Council.

The President: Thank you very much for that considered intervention and for highlighting the importance of national capacity. I now have the pleasure to give the floor to the representative of Peru.

Mr. Chávez (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to commend the United Kingdom presidency for proposing an exchange of views in the Council on peacebuilding in post-conflict situations.

May I first make a few comments about national ownership of the peacebuilding process. For Peru, each conflict has its own internal as well as international dynamic. Despite the underlying similarities in economic or social structures in some conflicts, there are ethnic, tribal, constitutional or historical characteristics that mean that there are no two identical cases or similar groups of relevant actors. Therefore, in order to tackle the post-conflict process more effectively, we have to recognize those features and not follow a single format.

International actors must be aware that a genuine process of ownership of the process of transition and peacebuilding will be more sustainable in the context of security — political, social, legal and economic — if there is social legitimacy providing inclusivity. For that, in addition to political elections, it is necessary to verify practices, rules and institutions for adopting and implementing agreements and for resolving disputes. That will make it possible gradually to extend the jurisdiction of the State, to affirm a legitimate authority with the right to use force, to consolidate central control of the territory with reformed security institutions, and to establish policies to provide public services, to administer natural resources, to encourage investment and to increase budget resources so as to arrive at self-sufficiency. Above all, the process must respect the rule of law and protect human rights as basic obligations.

As regards international cooperation, from the outset it must essentially be directed to strengthening the political system, the conflict resolution system and the training of professional civil servants. At the same time, we must highlight that quick-impact projects are relevant for creating greater awareness and eliciting the support of the local population. The participation of international financial institutions and local and international entrepreneurship are essential for the success of the process.

All this implies a medium- and long-term commitment, which means that the participation of the international community, with the agreement of the State concerned, may take place over several years and in many priority areas and, in some cases, in great depth. All that requires a strategic vision of the peacebuilding process, especially because processes are never linear — they may be regressive, or there may be new circumstances that effect the legitimacy or advances achieved in peacebuilding. That requires, therefore, strategic association among the political, social, educational and economic forces in the State being consolidated and the relevant international actors.

In a society that is rebuilding, it must be clear that the international assistance it receives is designed to strengthen the exercise of its own sovereignty, with full respect for international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter. It must be equally clear that there is a time limit to the provision of aid and that it must follow a programme with clear objectives to measure its progress and viability.

For those who are cooperating, the strategic association must respect political as well as social, economic and historical characteristics and must be based on a long-term commitment on the basis of indicators of progress. In the case of regional or international bodies and institutions of the United Nations system, that long-term commitment requires a convergence of actions and an additional effort for coordination. It may be necessary for regional organizations or the United Nations to lead the international peacebuilding effort to guarantee legitimacy, transparency, coordination and the correct follow-up of the reconstruction process.

The organizations must, therefore, be endowed with a great capacity for analysis, evaluation and planning so that they can react to sudden changes in the situation in the field that might endanger the peacebuilding process. Similarly, there must be a capacity to recognize the changes that the work of the Government and the international actors is producing on the ground so as to adjust policies and possibly the agreed goals. We believe that the Secretary-General can contribute with a description of the current situation and proposals on enhancing the work of the Organization, its organs, funds and programmes for more concerted action.

My delegation wishes to highlight the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, reiterates its support and hopes the Commission will continue to contribute to peacebuilding in Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, Burundi and other States that ask it for help. We will continue to support constructively the leadership of the United Nations and the Commission in those efforts.

The President: Thank you very much for that considered statement. I now have the pleasure to give the floor to the representative of Afghanistan.

Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan): First of all, let me avail myself of this opportunity to join the previous speakers in expressing our deepest condolences to the victims of the cyclone in Myanmar and the earthquake in China.

Allow me also to express my delegation's appreciation to the presidency of the United Kingdom for organizing today's important and timely open debate of the Security Council to consider the challenges facing the international community in stabilizing countries recovering from conflict and delivering sustainable peace. We are also thankful for the concept paper (S/2008/291, annex), which is certainly a comprehensive document that articulates the realities of dealing with situations in countries emerging from conflict. I am certain that the outcome of this debate will greatly benefit nations going through post-conflict stabilization and the peacebuilding process, as well as the United Nations.

Emerging from more than two decades of armed conflict, Afghanistan is well aware of the challenges associated with post-conflict stabilization efforts. Almost seven years ago, following the defeat of the Taliban in December 2001, the Bonn Agreement laid out the path to political transition in Afghanistan. It was clear from the outset that the stabilization of Afghanistan in the post-Taliban period would not be an easy task nor a smooth transition. As a result of long wars and foreign occupations, Afghanistan had become a failed State and a broken society. The reality of the situation was painted very tellingly today by Mr. Brahimi.

In fact, about seven years ago, Afghanistan was a geographical location without a State, a stage for factional wars imposed by invaders and outsiders, a safe haven for international terrorism and extremism, a land where the people lived in constant fear of bandits and thugs, and a country whose citizens were deprived of all their rights. In addition, more than half of its population, being female, could not go to school, work or even obtain simple medical care.

The collapse of the State led to nation-wide insecurity. Millions left the country or became internally displaced, and the social trust had been eroded. People reverted to traditional forms of mutual support, such as tribal and ethnic alliances, which led to increasing societal fragmentation. In a country where agriculture was the chief engine of the economy, illicit drugs became the main source of income. The land began to fuel the war rather than to feed the people.

Since the Bonn Agreement we have come a long way, in cooperation with the international community, in overcoming the enormous challenges of building the foundation of a new political system aimed at promoting long-term stability. We have adopted a new constitution, and, in 2004 and 2005, we held democratic presidential and parliamentary elections, which were overwhelmingly supported by all the people of Afghanistan.

To ensure security, recovery and development, we embarked on security sector reform, which serves as the lynchpin of the entire State-building process in the country. Thanks to the support of our international partners, our security forces have become stronger and effective. Our national army has now reached the level of 76,000 soldiers and has assumed a greater role in the fight against terrorists seeking to destabilize Afghanistan and the region.

In February 2006, five years after the Bonn Agreement, the Afghan Government and the international community came together in London to design a new roadmap in order to solidify our achievements and further empower Afghanistan to attain sustainable peace and development.

Despite all these remarkable gains, we still face challenges that pose a threat to our long-term stability. There are at least four major challenges to peace and stability in Afghanistan — terrorism, narcotics, weakness of governance, and poverty. Those challenges are interlinked, and they are an integral part of the same threat. In dealing with them, we realize that effective stabilization efforts in post-conflict situations require a comprehensive and multifaceted strategy, encompassing the essential components of social and economic development, good governance, human rights and the rule of law, and national reconciliation. Such an approach demands a proactive and sustained engagement of the international community in the process.

From the beginning of the Bonn process in Afghanistan, the United Nations has played a central role in bringing the international community together in order to help Afghanistan's transition from conflict to peace, stability and democracy. During the last year, a new momentum was built to reinvigorate the role of the United Nations in Afghanistan. The appointment of Mr. Kai Eide, the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, was an important and welcome step.

Today, we have a broad consensus that the United Nations should focus on its role as lead coordinator, essential for re-energizing efforts to bring about stabilization. The success of the United Nations in delivering its mandate depends on uniting the efforts of all international actors, including the donor community, NATO, the European Union, countries of the region, international financial institutions and non-governmental organizations, in support of the Government and the people of Afghanistan in their struggle for peace, stability and progress. The key elements for success of the United Nations in its role entail the full cooperation of all parties in being coordinated, as well as the mandate, resources and adequate staff on the ground. That was something Mr. Brahimi also emphasized today.

The role of the United Nations in Afghanistan, similar to that in other post-conflict situations, is to facilitate the stabilization efforts, including supporting institution-building and acting as a bridge between the international community and the Government and the people.

While State-building is a collective effort in post-conflict countries, national ownership of the process is the core principle. Given the enabling role of the international community, it is essential to invest more in establishing capable and functioning national institutions. To achieve that, we need to build national capacity to deal successfully with challenges that arise during the post-conflict stabilization. As experience shows, effective State-building is like a spider web, in that it works best when the web is built by the spiders themselves.

As we have learned from our experiences, the success of the international community and a national Government in the process of recovery from conflict is closely linked with the effective use of resources and aid. It is paramount that the aid be need-driven, not supply-driven. A coordinating strategy should reflect the principles of aid effectiveness and the successful delivery of aid aimed at improving the situation of the country and the people.

In Afghanistan, the enemies of peace and stability will continue their attempts to disrupt the efforts of the Government and the people as well as those of our international partners, efforts that are undertaken to establish a stable, prosperous and democratic Afghanistan. We are confident, however, that those actions will not succeed in interfering with our long-term goal of building a new Afghanistan. In this fight, what we need is the continuing commitment of the international community, time and resources.

I am confident that this debate will help the international community to join its efforts more than ever to deal with and address the challenges of post-conflict stabilization as well as to enhance the coordinating role of the United Nations.

The President: I thank the representative of Afghanistan for his statement and for sharing with us the lessons from Afghanistan. I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Turkey.

Mr. İlkin (Turkey): Allow me to start by reiterating our profound sorrow and heartfelt condolences for the loss of a great number of lives following the natural disasters in the People's Republic of China and Myanmar. We wish the injured a speedy and full recovery. I would also like to join previous speakers in commending the United Kingdom's presidency for organizing today's meeting on post-conflict peacebuilding.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by Slovenia on behalf of the European Union. I would like, however, to make a few remarks about Turkey's approach to the subject.

Turkey has always been a staunch supporter of United Nations peacebuilding efforts. In that regard, we welcomed the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, which we believe effectively fills an institutional gap within the United Nations system in terms of post-conflict management. The achievements of the Peacebuilding Commission so far in Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau are encouraging. We think that the long-term role and capacity of the Peacebuilding Commission should be fostered to enable it to include more post-conflict cases on its agenda.

But that does not in any way absolve the States concerned from their responsibilities to work to build peace in their own countries. The ownership of peacebuilding belongs first and foremost to the country concerned itself.

Experience has shown that it is much easier to win a war than to win the peace. There is a fine and delicate line between peacekeeping and peacebuilding and between peacebuilding and possible relapse. Failure is inevitable if peace is not supported from day one. Relapsing into conflict poses an even greater threat. Tangible results can only be achieved if security considerations and needs are addressed at a very early stage in post-conflict situations. Failure to build national security institutions can lead to the failure in the peacebuilding process. We have seen that happen in a number of countries in the post-conflict era.

Of course, peacebuilding is not only confined to the security dimension. Simultaneous progress in all the dimensions of peacebuilding is absolutely necessary. Good governance, human rights and capacity-building in all sectors are all part and parcel of the process. One must therefore consider them all together. It is crucial that the vast network of actors operate effectively and coherently. Every country could try to contribute to the process according to its own resources and expertise. That is how we approach the issue.

Cognizant of that wide framework, Turkey is currently focusing on the security dimension of the peacebuilding process and attaches particular importance to the civilian police component of United Nations missions. That is mainly because the demand for United Nations civilian police in post-conflict situations has grown tremendously. At present, Turkey is the eleventh largest police contributor, with hundreds of police officers serving in 10 different United Nations missions. We intend to further increase that contribution. With the ongoing growth in size and complexity of United Nations operations, we believe that we may consider undertaking a comprehensive review of the capabilities and needs of the police component at United Nations Headquarters. In that respect, we equally welcome the establishment of the Standing Police Capacity.

As for the issue of rapid and flexible funding, I believe the Peacebuilding Fund sets a good example. Contributions have exceeded the envisaged target of $250 million. That shows the international community's trust and faith in the success of the Peacebuilding Commission. Turkey has already made a contribution to the Peacebuilding Fund without any caveat. Turkey will continue to support the enhancement of the peacebuilding efforts of the United Nations in every possible way.

The President: I thank the representative of Turkey for his considered statement and for the focus on policing. I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Slovakia.

Mr. Burian (Slovakia): At the outset, I wish to underline that we fully align ourselves with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Slovenia, who spoke on behalf of the European Union. We would like to add a few additional comments on the issue of post-conflict peacebuilding that we consider important.

During the six decades of its existence, the United Nations has accumulated immense experience from its peacekeeping and peacebuilding endeavours. However, it has not always been successful in applying lessons learned and in avoiding mistakes in addressing problems of post-conflict recovery in various countries. Unprecedented growth in United Nations peacekeeping engagements and operations will be unsustainable if we do not find effective working solutions and exit strategies. It can only be achieved if efficient approaches to peacebuilding and best practices leading to early and sustainable post-conflict recovery are defined and put in practice.

The 2005 World Summit clearly defined the nexus between security, development and human rights on the global level. We must understand, however, that the same applies to the local level. Only balanced and coherent approaches to peacebuilding in all three areas can secure sustainable peace and development in a country emerging from violent conflict or civil war. We must also understand that there are no quick fixes or shortcuts. We have, all too often, witnessed initial progress and success in one area being ruined because they were not accompanied by similar progress and consistent approaches in other areas, and the country has subsequently slipped back into conflict and violence.

We agree with the President's concept paper on the fact that time is a precious commodity when dealing with post-conflict situations. After the conclusion of peace agreements, there is a narrow window of opportunity, which might close if the expectations on basic needs of people are not met. That is why there is a need for efficient mechanisms allowing for rapid reaction and immediate deployment, not only for peacekeepers but also civilian experts helping national authorities to design integrated peacebuilding strategies aimed at strengthening capacities in all critical areas: security; humanitarian response; securing the basic needs of the population while avoiding the creation of dependency on humanitarian aid and assistance; establishing a solid basis for sustainable development, the rule of law, and respect for human rights; and, last but not least, preventing impunity for gross violations of human rights.

Those elements should be reflected in Security Council mandates for peacekeeping missions from an early stage of the United Nations involvement in post-conflict peacebuilding. That urgency in developing adequate capacities and strategies from the very beginning of international engagement is important so as to ensure that the peacebuilding priorities and challenges are expeditiously and sufficiently addressed, including by creating synergies and complementarity between peacebuilding efforts and reform processes and by identifying solutions that are tailored to countries' specific needs and circumstances. It is important to underline in this context that national ownership is always crucial for the sustainability of the peacebuilding process.

The entire United Nations system must work in harmony and complementarity. There must be synergies between the activities and agendas of the various United Nations bodies and agencies in a post-conflict environment. There is no place for competition between them or unnecessary duplication. We believe integrated missions represent a step forward in that direction. There is, however, a need to examine how to improve their functions and mandates so as to achieve greater coherence and better reflect a holistic approach to post-conflict recovery.

In that regard, we believe that the potential, expertise and comparative advantages of United Nations agencies such as UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund, UNICEF and the World Food Programme should better incorporate such an approach and not attempt to replace or duplicate it in the structure and functions of integrated missions. That would, in our view, also allow, later, for an easier transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, when the mission leaves and the agencies assume their traditional development functions. We believe that the United Nations is best suited to generate long-term support, funding and assistance. It might also be acceptable as an impartial player, to coordinate the actions of various stakeholders of the international community and to secure coherent and consistent approaches.

The Peacebuilding Commission has clearly demonstrated its added value in that respect, and we wish to commend its work thus far. At the same time, we believe that its capacities and tools must be further expanded and adjusted for it to be able to respond to the concrete and diverse needs and requests for assistance of a larger number of Member States. In that regard, we also believe the Security Council should consider adding new States to the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission.

In conclusion, allow me to say a few words about an issue that was discussed in the Security Council last week (see S/PV.5889) and which has direct relevance to the discussion today. I am referring to security sector reform. Security sector reform is an important element of every post-conflict stabilization process. We are pleased with the level of understanding on the necessity of a holistic and system-wide approach to security sector reform that has been reached within the United Nations over the past year. Cases such as Haiti and Timor-Leste clearly demonstrate that, without comprehensive security sector reform, including the establishment of functioning and accountable security, justice and corrections institutions, no sustainable solutions are possible. The recommendations of the Secretary-General in his recent report on security sector reform (S/2008/39), including the creation of an inter-agency coordination mechanism within the Secretariat and a pool of external experts, are fully in line with the thrust and logic of this debate, and we believe they should be implemented as soon as possible.

Finally, thematic debates, such as the current one, involving various aspects of efficient peacebuilding contribute to a better understanding of the problem. Now there is a need to consolidate the mandate of the Security Council and the various United Nations bodies and create proper United Nations tools and mechanisms to also reflect that understanding in practice. In that respect, we welcome the draft presidential statement prepared by the United Kingdom, which summarizes the basic principles of post-conflict peacebuilding and, among other things, invites the Secretary-General to provide advice within 12 months for the relevant United Nations organs on how best to take this issue forward within the United Nations system. We fully support that idea, and we are ready to participate in future discussions on the matter.

The President: I thank the representative of Slovakia for again highlighting security sector reform.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Guatemala.

Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Thank you, Madam President, for convening this open debate and for having circulated an informative concept paper (S/2008/291, annex).

More than 11 years have passed since the Guatemalan peace accords were signed. Notable progress has been achieved, to such an extent that it is a matter of pride for us that the standing item on the situation in Central America no longer appears on the agenda of the General Assembly. However, some effects of the conflict persist to the present day and, at any rate, the peace process in Guatemala offers some lessons that, in our opinion, can enrich today's debate. I would like to refer very briefly to four characteristics of our peace process, which, in turn, support four conclusions. These address some of the questions posed in the concept paper.

First, it was the national stakeholders, in particular the Government and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca, that led the peace process. The United Nations and the Group of Friends of the process were invited by both sides to support the negotiations and, subsequently, the implementation of the peace agreement. At no time did Guatemalans in general perceive external actors as intrusive elements. Rather, they were present at the express request of the parties. I mention this only because the concept paper circulated today to orient our debate emphasizes the role of the United Nations in post-conflict situations. But before the Organization gets involved, however obvious this may seem, it is indispensable for national stakeholders to bear the primary responsibility for peacebuilding. That underlines the role that the United Nations can play in domestic capacity-building.

Secondly, the United Nations has played a uniquely important role in Guatemala, the scope of which has changed over time. The Organization was perceived as an objective facilitator without an agenda of its own. First, it supported the negotiations between the parties. Then it played a verification role with respect to human rights. In 1997, that verification role was augmented to cover all aspects of the peace accords. In 2004, as proof of the progress achieved, the United Nations Verification Mission left Guatemala. But the United Nations presence has continued and is now manifested through an office of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

It is also interesting to note that, except for a brief Security Council mandate to send a contingent of military observers to Guatemala for three months, the United Nations presence was always under the authority of the General Assembly.

Thirdly, during the existence of the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala, the United Nations had two presences in Guatemala: the director of the Verification Mission and the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations system. While that situation at times led to overlap and a certain amount of tension, it did not in general impede an acceptable level of coherence in the Organization's activities in Guatemala. That was due to two elements. On the one hand, it was the Government that set the priorities and guidelines for action for such activities, and on the other hand, the two heads of mission made deliberate efforts to act in a coordinated manner. In that respect, although the recommendation contained in the concept paper prepared by the United Kingdom on placing all United Nations activities under the responsibility of a single person is noteworthy, our experience also suggests that alternative pragmatic solutions that can be acceptable from the point of view of coherency.

Finally, I mentioned at the outset that some effects of the conflict persist, which is another way of saying that the phase of peacebuilding and reconciliation can be protracted. That is especially true when a change of attitude is needed so that a culture of tolerance and dialogue can blossom where it did not exist before.

The concept paper to which I have referred several times correctly emphasizes the near term, but our experience indicates that we must persist for a very long time if we wish the rule of law and democratic institutions to take root. It is for that reason, and to combat the important islands of impunity that still persist in my country, that last year Guatemala again partnered with the United Nations in a creative exercise to strengthen penal prosecution through the creation of the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala.

Those are the points we wished to bring to the attention of this Chamber.

The President: I call on the representative of Thailand.

Mr. Punkrasin (Thailand): First of all, Madam, I wish to congratulate your delegation on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May. I would also like to take this opportunity to express appreciation, through you, to the United Kingdom for its initiative to hold this timely open debate on post-conflict peacebuilding and for the concept paper for the debate.

Peacebuilding requires the sincerity and genuine commitment of all parties concerned. The lesson that we have painfully learnt is that many conflicts settled through negotiations and peace agreements are, in fact, unsettled. Within a few days, weeks, months or years, many areas relapse into conflict. Those who suffer the most are civilians, especially innocent women and children. They have to bear the brunt and brutality of wars, scared for their lives and unable to see what kind of future, if any, might lay ahead for them. Conflict can leave life physically and mentally scarred. The relapse of peace into war may further shatter the people's spirits and hopes. The fragility of peace is therefore something we need to watch carefully, and we must expend our utmost effort to break the vicious circle of conflict.

In order to secure lasting negotiated peace, there is an urgent need to implement peace agreements to maintain the commitments of parties. From a different perspective, when the relapse occurs we need to look back and carefully and critically examine what went wrong, why the conflict broke out again and why peace did not last. Perhaps the peace was forced; perhaps the agreement was unfair; perhaps the parties were pressured into giving in. As a result, the peace was not real. Despite good intentions, it was filled with mistrust and lacked the spirit of cooperation. What is more important is what we should do to address the error and prevent the future repetition of history.

As I mentioned earlier, peacebuilding needs the sincerity and commitment of all parties, and they must be prevalent at all levels, including the local, national, regional and international levels. The international community, the United Nations in particular, could play a vital supporting role in building and sustaining peace in areas emerging from conflict. It must be emphasized that international undertakings must be made with a coherent approach and in a coordinated manner.

A number of United Nations system agencies are involved in the peacebuilding processes, including the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and UNICEF. Also pertinent are other international organizations, the international financial institutions, regional organizations and civil society.

However, it is imperative that peacebuilding be nationally owned if it is to last after the end of international peacebuilding support in that area. International leadership on the ground is important, but it is even more important that the international community promote local and national leadership and capacity on the ground and thereby reinforce national ownership.

Peace should be looked at not only from the military perspective; it should also be considered in the socio-economic, cultural and development contexts. Peacebuilding should enhance security, stability, justice and the rule of law, good governance, socio-economic development and, ultimately, human security and the livelihood of the people. My delegation welcomes the presidential statement on security sector reform, issued under the symbol S/PRST/2008/14 and adopted last week, which rightly points out that such reform is a necessary component of peacebuilding. However, it is only one among many.

The peacebuilding process must lay the foundations for both security and sustainable development. Security sector reform can help improve the institutional infrastructures of a war-torn country, but it may not expeditiously yield direct improvement in the lives of the people in the short and long terms. My delegation is of the view that it is essential that peacebuilding incorporate development elements in its agenda. The scope of peacebuilding may thus have to be expanded and would be more suitable for discussion in the frameworks of the Peacebuilding Commission and the General Assembly. However, the inclusion of development issues opens more windows for the international community to contribute more assistance to the multifaceted peacebuilding process.

The presidential statement also emphasizes the important role of the Peacebuilding Commission in ensuring continuous international support for post-conflict countries. My delegation believes that the Commission would be the appropriate forum, under the guidance of both the Security Council and the General Assembly, for such discussions in detail concerning international peacebuilding efforts and strategies.

There have been some debates concerning the transition and gap between peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities on the peace continuum. The United Kingdom's concept paper raises the issues of rapidly deployable capacity and funding. My delegation would like to share its initial thought that peacebuilding activities could and should be prepared in advance in terms of human and financial resources. The activities may have to begin, in some cases, even before the completion of the peacekeeping operations. A smooth transition must also be ensured. As a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, my delegation is aware of the discussion concerning the line drawn between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. It may be a necessary overlap, but the special representative of the Secretary-General and the resident coordinator may perhaps have to play dual roles in both activities.

As a troop-contributing country, Thailand has participated in United Nations and international peacekeeping operations for many decades. My delegation always views our troop contributions as an honour for the opportunity to work side by side with peacekeepers from other troop-contributing countries and to help bring peace to the world. My delegation can assure the Security Council that our commitment to United Nations peacekeeping remains unwavering. Furthermore, as members may well be aware, Thai troops are recognized not only for their bravery, but also for their congeniality, expertise and development contributions to local communities.

For us, the concept of peace equalling security and development is not new at all. Our interest has never been limited to peacekeeping. My delegation believes that we could perform even better in peacebuilding activities. With our experiences and expertise to share, we could make a tremendous contribution to the Peacebuilding Commission. It is in that regard that Thailand has decided to present its candidature for the Organizational Committee of the Commission in the General Assembly category for the term 2008-2010.

The absence of conflict does not mean that there is peace. Peace itself and peacebuilding are a long process of reconciliation. Peace can be sustained not by force, but by nurture. It is mainly the responsibility of all parties concerned to faithfully adhere to jointly accepted peace agreements. The international community must also sincerely assist countries emerging from conflict, whenever needed and possible, in building peace in those countries, regions and the world.

The President: I thank the representative of Thailand for his very thoughtful contribution and for highlighting the issue of sustainable development. I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Nigeria.

Mrs. Ogwu (Nigeria): The Nigerian delegation deeply appreciates your initiative, Madam President, not only in convening this open debate, but also in providing a timely concept paper (S/2008/291, annex), which highlights the underlying principles and challenges confronting post-conflict peacebuilding.

We share your view that peace operations are a shared responsibility that depends on the support and cooperation of a range of actors. As a result of our experience in Nigeria, and as a country that has devoted enormous resources — including lives — to United Nations peacekeeping around the world, we believe that the primary challenge is how to translate peacebuilding initiatives into concrete benefits that touch human lives at basic levels. Another persistent challenge is how to coordinate and create synergy among various peacebuilding actors and stakeholders for a fully integrated response following the signing of peace agreements. Overcoming those challenges demands swift implementation of the strategic frameworks developed for the countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Peacebuilding requires sustained political attention as well as flexible financial and material resources. Only when these are combined with speedy delivery can tangible results become manifest. We are witnesses to situations where the slow delivery of approved funds has compounded the difficulties of recovery efforts and, in fact, has impeded the deployment of international personnel and materiel. We would therefore like to caution against political and financial apathy, especially when time is of the essence and the situation is urgent.

In that context, and mindful of the ever-increasing demands on the Peacebuilding Fund, which have raised valid concerns about its sustainability, we urge the establishment of a funds monitoring and tracking mechanism to follow up on the commitments often made at donor conferences. My delegation endorses the call for the establishment of a United Nations fund to provide support for reconstruction. In order to ensure its efficacy and solvency, such a fund should, in addition to seeking contributions from national Governments, explore voluntary funding sources such as multilateral banks, international foundations and global corporations.

Regarding the enhancement of civilian capacity in critical functional areas, such as justice and security sector reform, health services, civil service administration and transitional justice, we believe that Nigeria's Technical Aid Corps programme constitutes a model that the Peacebuilding Commission should seek to adopt to fill capacity gaps in post-conflict countries. Since its inception, in 1987, more than 3,000 volunteers have been deployed on a bilateral basis across 38 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. Under the Technical Aid programme, specialized personnel — medical doctors, nurses, lawyers, educationists and engineers — are deployed from Nigeria to provide support and capacity-building for the receiving countries, on the basis, of course, of the requests and expressed needs of those countries. In post-conflict situations, the Peacebuilding Commission, in consultation with national Governments and other stakeholders, can build on this model to solve capacity limitation problems, especially in addressing the need for judicial experts, human rights specialists and civilian police. That is a crucial way to ensure that appropriate experts are rapidly deployed.

In a globalized world, there are imperatives for effective peacebuilding. Coordination and coherence constitute such imperatives. We therefore call for improved coordination among international peacebuilding actors in the field. The Peacebuilding Commission needs to strengthen its relationships with non-governmental development partners and with regional and subregional organizations. In that context, we believe that the African Union's Policy Framework on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development and the conflict resolution mechanism of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which deals explicitly with peacebuilding, should guide peacebuilding efforts in Africa.

My delegation wishes to underline the importance of the regional dimension to the entire peacebuilding process in Africa. The threats posed by illicit arms trafficking, human and drug trafficking, the energy and debt crises, internal militancy and other transboundary challenges cannot be neglected. The nexus between those threats and incessant relapses into conflict should never be discounted. Indeed, my delegation believes that those issues, in particular the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, constitute the greatest threats to peacebuilding in Africa. In recognition of that reality, Nigeria has been unrelenting in providing financial and material support for the implementation of several peacebuilding projects in the subregion — under, of course, the rubric of ECOWAS — and we pledge to continue to do so.

The President: I thank the representative of Nigeria for setting out some important areas for follow-up, including drawing on the experiences of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Nigeria.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of India.

Mr. Sen (India): Let me begin by joining others in expressing India's heartfelt condolences on the losses of lives sustained by two of our close neighbours, the People's Republic of China and Myanmar, as a result of natural calamities. Let me also place on record our appreciation of the leadership of the Security Council by the United Kingdom presidency for the month of may.

It was in recognition of the international community's less-than-stellar record in securing lasting peace after more successfully stopping conflict that we established the Peacebuilding Commission as the centrepiece of an international effort to promote post-conflict peace consolidation. In that context, our delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

I shall try to address the questions posed in the concept paper (S/2008/291, annex). The roots of peacebuilding go deep into the Security Council mandate on peacekeeping. It is therefore important to implement Article 44 of the United Nations Charter and to involve troop-contributing countries in shaping that mandate. For instance, our armed forces have effective programmes aimed at winning minds and hearts.

National ownership is essential in peacebuilding. This is not just a question of sovereignty; it is a functional matter. For instance, schools and clinics have on occasion been constructed by multiple agencies and non-governmental organizations in post-conflict situations, which later were found unsustainable, leading to duplication and waste. National ownership mitigates this. While the paper correctly points out the need for better operational coordination among international agencies on the ground, empowerment of Special Representatives of the Secretary-General is not necessarily the solution, especially if such concentration of authority is achieved at the expense of nascent national leadership, which is often an inevitable if unintended consequence. It is national ownership that must assess critical requirements and gaps and must share that assessment institutionally with those who have the ability to deliver on bridging those gaps. That would also help us respond to the problem posed by the inadequacy of international resources in helping to stabilize post-conflict countries when everything is urgent.

As for the planning and running of operations, including the international financial institutions, the Peacebuilding Commission has the mandate to bring together and mobilize all actors, especially in marshalling resources. Above all, it signals the commitment of the international community to the State concerned, unique as a hedge against political risk to private capital.

The Bretton Woods institutions need to be brought into an optimal agenda. They advised Cambodia to reduce its civil service by 20 per cent — after Pol Pot had already decimated it. The downsizing was apparently not enough for them. Four countries in Africa that collapsed into civil war had been, in the preceding ten years, 62 to 83 per cent under a programme of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Mining companies sometimes leave next to nothing to Governments for spending on social infrastructure. IMF pressure to privatize makes such imbalanced contracting more likely. It would be useful for the World Bank or another expert body to develop model auction procedures and model contracts.

The concept paper touches upon factors that hamper efforts of the United Nations and the international community in country. The United Nations contractual system needs to be streamlined and conditions of service of the Secretariat staff in the field harmonized with those of funds and programmes in order to get and retain personnel of better quality.

The concept paper outlines the need to establish a rapidly deployable civilian capacity. That idea must be elaborated through open, inclusive and transparent negotiations in order to give the end result greater legitimacy. India hopes to participate fully in discussing this concept, which holds the promise of a new paradigm of cooperation between developed and developing States. Once the concept is fully elaborated, recruitment of those who can deploy the appropriate talents, skills and technologies would greatly help in peacebuilding.

In conclusion, I would like to underline our support for the notion that post-conflict peace consolidation remains one of the most serious challenges that the United Nations faces collectively. However, we cannot produce more creative and flexible approaches to address that challenge unless we are willing to move beyond fixed positions. Outside these walls, the world sees only one United Nations, not its constituent organs or Member States. Our effort must therefore be based on a more collective and inclusive approach, one that justifies the first word of the title: the United Nations.

The President: Thank you very much, Sir, for that very thoughtful statement and the focus on integration.

Before giving the floor to the next speaker, may I note that we have 12 more speakers on the list. The interpreters have kindly agreed to continue past 6 o'clock, but I encourage remaining speakers to stick to the limit set at the beginning; that would be very helpful.

The next speaker is the representative of Honduras, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Reina Idiaquez (Honduras) (*spoke in Spanish*): Before beginning my statement I would like to express, on behalf of Honduras, the most sincere sense of solidarity with the Governments and peoples of Myanmar and China at the recent loss of human lives caused by natural disasters in those countries.

First, I wish to convey to the presidency the appreciation of my delegation for convening this timely special meeting of the Security Council to focus on post-conflict reconstruction. Holding these open meetings on a regular basis is a step forward in the search for transparency and equality of opportunity for delegations to participate in the work of this important organ of our Organization. It should be an example to follow.

This meeting, an initiative of the United Kingdom, is an essential step in our discussions about the Council and the need to reform and expand it and, more than anything, to become aware of the fact that currently, peacekeeping operations authorized by the Council must always include political, economic, social and humanitarian components so that the local problems can be tackled after all hostilities have ceased.

Reconstruction in post-conflict situations is indispensable to avoid a return to deplorable situations of armed conflict. My country, Honduras, at the heart of the Americas, after turbulent events in the Central American region that have fortunately receded into the past, finds itself a democracy with regional institutions for economic, political and social integration. The Central American Integration System, the Central American Parliament, the Central American Bank for Economic Integration and the Central American Court of Justice are among the most relevant. All that has been achieved after many meetings and discussions at the regional level, which led to the institutionalization of Central American summits, which are held quite often to resolve the most important problems in the region. Honduras has made Central American integration its standard, and today we wish to contribute with our message to the experiences acquired.

Central America has the most comprehensive experience of successes when it comes to organizing peace, because the United Nations set up the Observer Group in Central America, the Observer Mission to Verify the Electoral Process in Nicaragua, the Observer Mission in El Salvador and the Verification Mission in Guatemala in the region in a continuous and thoroughgoing process, in full cooperation with the Governments of the region.

My delegation has accompanied all recent reforms of the international architecture undertaken under the guidance of the United Nations and the proposals of the Secretary-General, so now the Peacebuilding Commission is a reality, the Human Rights Council is operating, and the special missions of the Economic and Social Council are contributing to improving the prospects for resolving and preventing domestic conflict and, further, making it possible to take the necessary measures to help the local populations to avoid new outbursts of violence.

It is precisely in preventing conflict that one finds the best response to conflict. Military peacekeeping operations per se are not so complex if we compare them to the problems that remain in various States and regions after an armed conflict.

Today we are facing greater challenges with the current energy and food crises and the disruptions of nature caused by the serious alterations of climate change. My country recognizes the proposals in the concept paper prepared by the United Kingdom for consideration and analysis (S/2008/291, annex). It contains elements of great value that require more and better discussion. The proposals must be viewed in a holistic manner, along with the concepts in the Brahimi report on peace operations (S/2000/809). We should also take into consideration the earlier resolutions of this Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council that deal with humanitarian and social affairs.

Any crisis will come with many perspectives and facets, and the analysis of a crisis must examine problems such as social inequality, massive violations of human rights, lack of political participation, racial discrimination, economic disparities and racial segregation. These are just some of the elements that generate armed national conflicts and transcend international borders when they provoke a flow of refugees.

Honduras considers that the Millennium Development Goals are an indispensable tool for averting conflict, and that is why we appeal to the international community — in particular, what are called the industrialized countries — to become aware of their international responsibility for eradicating extreme poverty and hunger in the world.

Millions of people in the world live on less than one dollar per day. They are the first to feel the deadly impact of the "silent tsunami", as some have called the food crisis caused by the sudden rise in the prices of food commodities. The world experienced a dramatic increase in food prices in the first quarter of 2008, and in real terms the prices of staple foods reached peaks unheard of in three decades. This crisis will exacerbate world poverty and malnutrition, so we must improve coordination and increase the preventive and response capacity of Governments and international bodies.

Innovative alternatives must be found to enhance the establishment of integrated peace operations for the benefit of humankind. The international community cannot continue to ignore the pleas of the world's dispossessed and to attempt to solve its problems using military means as a priority, when the causes of those problems are social and humanitarian.

The President: I thank the representative of Honduras for sharing conclusions drawn from his own country's experience, as well as for highlighting the Economic and Social Council debate on food security.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Argentina.

Mr. Argüello (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all let me congratulate the United Kingdom presidency on the way it has been guiding the Security Council debate during the month of May. At the same time, I thank you, Madam President, for the timely convening of this open debate on a theme of great importance at the present time, a theme on which your country plays a leadership role.

My country considers that United Nations and, in particular, the Security Council have a key responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security. Likewise, the Organization has a crucial role to play in post-conflict peacebuilding in laying the foundation for sustainable peace and development.

One of the greatest challenges facing the international community and the United Nations is to support States in recovering from conflict and building sustainable peace. An effective response by the Organization requires the preparation of a broad, coordinated strategy, based on identifying priorities and setting specific goals and time frames. This task requires many kinds of activities: political, security, rule of law, humanitarian, development and the defence of and respect for human rights.

In that stage of preparing a broad strategy and identifying the priorities, we emphasize the importance of national ownership: the participation and responsibility of the authorities of the country emerging from conflict, which should be involved throughout the reconstruction process in order to ensure an agreed response that can address the root causes of a conflict with greater legitimacy and effectiveness.

My country welcomes the work of the Peacebuilding Commission as an advisory body on the coordination of all international activities and resources aimed at post-conflict stabilization. It plays a crucial role in coordinating national authorities and all other actors involved in reconstruction and development, including United Nations bodies and agencies, international financial institutions, civil society and the private sector. We believe that the role of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund should be enhanced.

My delegation also wishes to highlight the important role of regional and subregional organizations in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, and the need to strengthen the capacities of regional arrangements in helping countries to recover and rebuild after a conflict.

I wish in conclusion to repeat once more what we have said before in this Chamber: that Argentina is convinced of the Organization's responsibility in supporting countries recovering from conflict — together with their national authorities and in collaboration with regional arrangements and other actors — in order to rebuild and strengthen their institutions and to avoid forever the recurrence of a conflict scenario.

The President: I thank the representative of Argentina for his very well considered and thoughtful intervention.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Papua New Guinea.

Mr. Aisi (Papua New Guinea): I thank you, Madam President, for convening this important meeting on a subject that continues to challenge all of us in one way or another. I also wish the United Kingdom all the very best during the remainder of its term as President of the Council.

On 16 June 2005, the Security Council wound up the seven-year-old United Nations mandate which had overseen the resolution of the bloody 10-year civil conflict which had raged on the island of Bougainville in Papua New Guinea. Sadly, it is estimated that between 10,000 and 15,000 — and maybe more — people, including women and children, lost their lives in a national tragedy that could have been avoidable.

A few months earlier, between 20 May and 9 June 2005, the first general elections for the President and members of the House of Representatives had been held to form the Autonomous Bougainville Government. That historic election had been made possible under constitutional arrangements agreed between the Government of Papua New Guinea and the leaders of Bougainville. The United Nations was also a critical part of that process.

The agreed constitutional arrangements also allows for the devolution of powers in areas such as land, the judiciary, finance, transportation and communications, to name but a few. The powers relating to defence and foreign affairs continue to remain national functions. Uniquely, the same constitutional arrangements provide for a referendum to be held amongst the people of Bougainville within 15 years of the election of the first Autonomous Bougainville Government.

To some extent the three points raised in paragraph 2 of the excellent concept paper from the United Kingdom Mission (S/2008/291, annex) had been met when the United Nations mandate was wound up. Those points are, first, rapid implementation of the peace agreement to maintain the commitment of the parties; secondly, the re-establishment of stability and the rule of law; and, finally, a demonstrable improvement to the lives of the local people.

The overall involvement of the United Nations during the mandate, although small in both manpower and budget, was very effective. One element that the United Nations was able to bring during the formulation of the peace process was an independent perspective, which assisted all the parties to agree on critical aspects of how the peace process was to be structured.

A very strong regional dimension, especially the involvement of our immediate neighbours in the Pacific, contributed strongly to the success of the peace process. By the time the United Nations mandate was wound up, countries such as Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu, Samoa and the Solomon Islands had assisted in some way or another, with major logistical support provided by both Australia and New Zealand, which enabled the maintenance of all personnel on the ground in Bougainville. Japan also assisted.

Added to this, the critical political support from both the Government of Papua New Guinea and the leaders of Bougainville was also an important aspect. Over the life of the United Nations mandate, three successive Papua New Guinea Governments affirmed that the resolution of the Bougainville conflict was critical to the stability of Papua New Guinea and thus saw it as a bipartisan imperative. In the end, this continued strong commitment saw the required amendment to the Papua New Guinea constitution to effect the Bougainville peace process overwhelmingly supported by the national parliament.

The current situation is that, as we move towards the third anniversary of the dissolution of the United Nations mandate over Bougainville, next month, the peace process continues. Political commitment at the highest levels of our Government continues. The civil service and senior officials on both sides continue to maintain, within the framework of joint meetings, the process of steady devolution of powers under the constitutional arrangement. The people of Bougainville have also taken part in the national election process, the most recent being during the middle of last year. Our regional partners continue to assist us in areas such as police training, and the United Nations, through its agencies, continues to deliver in various areas, such as girls' education.

The national Government continues to provide for Bougainville in its annual budget.

That said, it seems the more critical issue here is the third point covered in the concept paper: that of "a demonstrable improvement to the lives of local people" (S/2008/291, annex, paragraph 2). I would suggest that this point presents a potential gap that could hamper national, regional and international efforts.

The situation on the ground on Bougainville remains one that requires constant vigilance and attention. The danger is that recurring incidents of minor violence always have the potential to provoke larger acts of violence that could lead to wider instability. We have seen instances and signs of this in the last three years. Fortunately, the incidents have been contained so far. So the connection between the need to maintain focus on reintegrating ex-combatants and the need to assist the wider community in developing a range of skills, especially vocational skills, is an important focus area.

It is important to underline the importance of a gender perspective in the process of post-conflict peacebuilding. There is a global consensus that a gender perspective is critical in the development agenda; so too it would seem critical in the conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes. Much of Bougainville is matrilineal. When the women of Bougainville were re-empowered, the peace process could be better facilitated. Perhaps the toolkit of response measures for conflict resolution and peacebuilding should include a realization that local customs and traditions must be better understood.

We support the position of the Non-Aligned Movement on the functionality of the Peacebuilding Commission, and we seek the Commission's support in assisting us in strengthening the peacebuilding process on Bougainville, in Papua New Guinea.

The President: I thank the representative of Papua New Guinea for his statement and for highlighting his country's experience. I now have pleasure in giving the floor to the representative of Georgia.

Mr. Alasania (Georgia): At the outset, let me express my condolences to the families of victims of the tragedies caused by the natural disasters in China and Myanmar.

I would like to extend our gratitude to the United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations for the excellent opportunity afforded us to address this crucial issue.

Georgia aligns itself with the statement made by the Slovenian representative on behalf of European Union.

Georgia considers the Peacebuilding Commission, in close cooperation with the other main United Nations bodies, as the most important instrument in the field of peacebuilding, post-conflict rehabilitation and stabilization. As a member of the newly established body, Georgia is looking forward to the implementation of the strategic frameworks in those respective fields.

As we are discussing comprehensive issues related to post-conflict peacebuilding, allow me to contribute with observations based on experience gained during 15 years of hosting peacekeeping operations in Abkhazia, Georgia.

We believe that a strong peacekeeping operation has to be supported by solid law enforcement and security elements in order to create the secure environment necessary for ensuring the normal rhythm of life. We refer to the impartial international civilian law enforcement elements, which can effectively restore law and order and ensure the dignified and safe return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their homes.

For more than a decade now, we have been witnessing that most of the objectives of the current peacekeeping forces in Abkhazia, Georgia have not been achieved. Clearly, our experience seriously calls into question the rationale of having an immediate neighbour country serving as the dominant peacekeeper in the conflict. In our case, the gradual shift from a military peacekeeping operation to an international police operation with capabilities for addressing threats to security and stability is inevitable. We assume that the role of an effective international police force should include anti-crime patrols, investigation of crimes and human rights violations and the training of local police forces.

We are confident that efficient conflict resolution in Abkhazia, Georgia requires the appropriate enlargement and enforcement of the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), especially in the field of law enforcement activities. Together with operational functions, the new mandate should allow the civilian police to supervise, guide and train joint local police forces to enforce the law effectively and impartially. The primary goal of the international civilian police is to restore law and order and assist national institutions while maintaining full respect for the host country's sovereignty.

Based on our experience, the blueprint for a successful peacekeeping operation includes impartiality guaranteed by wider international representation and solid collective international efforts to ensure the operation's responsiveness to the changes on the ground.

The President: I thank the representative of Georgia for his statement and for his account of

Georgia's own experiences. I now have pleasure in giving the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Kim Bong-Hyun (Republic of Korea): Let me join previous speakers in thanking the presidency of the United Kingdom for organizing this open debate on post-conflict peacebuilding. I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of my delegation to convey our sincere condolences to the peoples of China and Myanmar for their suffering due to the recent natural disasters.

My delegation would like to underline the successful operation of the Peacebuilding Commission's three country-specific meetings, on Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. My delegation commends the Commission for addressing the challenges of post-conflict peacebuilding and development simultaneously, which we believe will contribute to solving the root cause of the recurrent nature of conflicts. We also appreciate the Commission for bringing all relevant actors together into a single forum to develop peacebuilding strategies for post-conflict countries. In this regard, my delegation hopes the Commission's working method will be further developed so that more post-conflict countries will benefit from its valuable work.

To ensure the Peacebuilding Commission's comprehensive approach and maximize its synergistic effects, my delegation would like to stress the importance of communication among the United Nations, its field missions and Member States. The United Nations should play a central role in maintaining such triangular communication so that Member States are fully informed and remain connected to the field. That approach will enable us to collect the best available peacebuilding experiences and secure future participation from Member States.

There is no doubt that strong and effective leadership in the United Nations field missions is necessary to meet the need for more coordinated peacebuilding efforts. On that note, my delegation would like to commend the Security Council for its creation of an integrated field office with peacebuilding mandates in Sierra Leone through its resolutions 1620 (2005), 1734 (2006) and 1793 (2007). My delegation supports the Security Council in the extension of peacebuilding mandates to other United Nations field missions and their heads.

The peacebuilding strategies recommended by the Commission cannot be accomplished without sufficient funds. My delegation reiterates that as the Commission fulfils its mandates and proves its worth, Member States will recognize its achievements by increasing their contributions to the Peacebuilding Fund. However, the Fund is designed to cover initial financial needs of post-conflict countries, and the international community should consider how to effectively help those countries in financing their long-term peacebuilding needs. My delegation would like to advance its view that the United Nations should first develop a standing contact mechanism with international financial institutions with a view to facilitating the mobilization of peacebuilding funds.

Non-financial contributions such as technical assistance for capacity-building in a post-conflict country should also be considered a necessary resource for peacebuilding. The United Nations should not spare its efforts to make non-financial contributions available at the locations where they are needed. In this regard, my delegation would like to see the Organization further develop its partnerships with regional organizations and civil society in order to allow them to be fully engaged with peacebuilding efforts. Their role would be even more critical in ensuring rapidly deployable and skilled civilian capacity for real field work.

Finally, national ownership should be highlighted to avoid moral hazards and solidify post-conflict peacebuilding efforts on the ground. In that context, we believe that the United Nations should encourage and strengthen a national Government to actively participate in the process of recovery and reconstruction of its own post-conflict nation.

The Republic of Korea is willing to contribute to the world's peacebuilding efforts and the further development of the peacebuilding activities of the United Nations. It is our sincere hope that the United Nations will continue its considerable success and facilitate peace throughout the world.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Serbia.

Mr. Jevremović (Serbia): Serbia welcomes the debate on post-conflict peacebuilding.

Before I proceed to make my statement, I would like to point out that Serbia has aligned itself with the statement made by the Representative of the Republic of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union.

Also, I would like to present the views of my country based on its experience in respect of the subject of our debate today, which can be useful in identifying the critical gaps that hamper international efforts to stabilize post-conflict countries and to build sustainable peace.

By and large, today's conflicts are caused by ethnicity and religion and are often exacerbated by social and economic antagonisms. Solutions to violent conflicts always necessitate a complex process with an uncertain outcome.

Reconciliation is a critical aspect of post-conflict peacebuilding. Nowadays, the United Nations plays a vital role in that process, especially in creating conditions necessary for reconciliation. Ethnic conflicts are a cause of population displacement, of which the worst aspect is ethnic cleansing. Therefore, the safe return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) can be taken as a yardstick of the reconciliation process. The return of property and compensation are equally important. In our own experience, especially in the case of the province of Kosovo and Metohija, the results of the rehabilitation and IDP returns are very disappointing. The rehabilitation of refugees from conflicts in other parts of the former Yugoslavia is equally discouraging. If those problems are not addressed properly, reconciliation and peacebuilding will remain uncertain.

The essential framework for the rehabilitation of post-conflict countries is respect for human rights, particularly those of minorities and other disfavoured communities. The indispensable dimension of respect for human rights is the rule of law. That is of paramount importance for lasting peace and stability, whereas its absence is a great threat to conflict resurgence.

The rule of law in today's world, characterized by a process of globalization and unprecedented integration, has an international dimension as well. To be more specific, it means full respect for the United Nations Charter and other international legal standards that guarantee equality and mutual respect among States and their sovereignty and integrity. In the past, the arbitrary redrawing of national borders and the recomposition of territories have generated unprecedented violence and tragedies. The recent experiences of our region provide ample evidence in that regard.

However, the simple truth is that the redistribution of territory cannot be substituted for human rights and the rule of law. Of late, we have been repeatedly told that the unilateral declaration of independence of the province of Kosovo and Metohija is the final act of the dismemberment of Yugoslavia. In essence, that original notion amounts to diverting the issue and sweeping the problem under the carpet. After all, the story of the tragedy that followed the dismemberment of Yugoslavia is yet to be told. However, if we have learned anything from that bitter experience, we, the countries of the region, should spare no effort to be admitted under the secure European roof.

Regional organizations play an ever more important role in peacebuilding. However, their role must not run counter to the role and the primary responsibility of the United Nations for safeguarding international peace and security. Furthermore, there has to be not a modicum of doubt that a Security Council decision must underpin each and every activity of regional organizations. That conforms to my country's position on the European Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, the European Union mission to Kosovo and Metohija, an extremely important project that requires very careful elaboration firmly embedded in the United Nations monitoring and decision-making process.

Several years ago, Mr. Kofi Annan, the then Secretary-General of the United Nations, said in his report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration that the international community "can ill-afford to declare victory prematurely". Indeed, post-conflict societies are unstable and early positive results should not justify an early reduction or withdrawal of international presences. A change in the scope of the engagement of international actors must be carried out only on the basis of an objective, consensual and realistic assessment of the capacity of local actors to assume the functions of those presences. The role of the United Nations in those processes, let me reiterate, is and remains indispensable.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of El Salvador.

Mrs. Gallardo Hernández (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): El Salvador welcomes your initiative, Madam, to convene this open debate of the Security

Council to consider the question of post-conflict peacebuilding.

One result of the 2005 World Summit was that our heads of State and Government agreed on the importance of overcoming the lack of coherence in the global vision that comprises the various phases of action taken by the international community to promote peacekeeping, peacebuilding and the transition towards development. Thus, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office are today the core elements of the new United Nations peacebuilding architecture.

During the past two years of the Commission's existence, El Salvador has made every effort to contribute, in its capacity as Vice-Chair and in the coordination of the Working Group on Lessons Learned, to strengthening the Commission as an advisory body to the Security Council and the General Assembly in the field of post-conflict peacebuilding. That new architecture has generated great expectations among the various players in the international community, in particular among countries in and emerging from conflict, since the Commission offers hope for better understanding of the goals and targets that underpin peacebuilding activities in each specific case.

We acknowledge with satisfaction that the Peacebuilding Commission is exercising solid and significant leadership in the field, motivating the participation and inclusion of national actors, particularly those that play a key role in the peacebuilding decision-making process, thereby supporting the formulation of strategic frameworks for peacebuilding in each specific case. In that respect, we stress the Commission's active and responsible position in promoting the pillars that anchor collective security and well-being: peace, security, development and human rights.

In view of the foregoing, the Commission should be allowed to continue developing a comprehensive vision that will strengthen the coherence of the United Nations system on the ground while contributing to a better understanding by the Member States of the complex multidimensional factors involved in peacekeeping. El Salvador believes it essential for the Commission to continue to deepen its experiences in a comprehensive manner.

We welcome the fact that an inclusive agreement was reached on the peacebuilding strategies for Burundi and Sierra Leone and that progress continues in the exchange of experiences on factors that have contributed to conflicts in other parts of the world, through the study and assimilation of lessons learned and the thematic debates that we have held.

In that regard, allow me to recall the importance of strengthening cohesion among the peacebuilding goals and strategies, with the available resources for the attainment of those goals. From that perspective, the added value generated by the Commission is to be found in its very composition.

El Salvador agrees on the importance of recognizing that the raison d'être of the Commission must not be limited to the mobilization of financial resources for peacebuilding processes. It is also essential to go beyond that perspective to understand that the complexity of conflicts requires multidisciplinary action and a comprehensive medium- and long-term vision that will motivate the participation of all stakeholders in those processes.

The proposed quick-impact programmes must not lead us to lose sight of the fact that what truly matters is that the social fabric of a country emerging from conflict is repaired in a climate of reconciliation and peace, while taking the first steps towards development. As we have said, institution-building is the basic responsibility of national stakeholders, and it must be one of the main long-term achievements of the Peacebuilding Commission.

El Salvador, as a country that has made the transition from conflict to development, has sought, since it joined the Commission, to share its experiences, to understand the new realities and to seek innovative mechanisms that will help the countries under consideration: Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. Allow me to reiterate that El Salvador is prepared to share the practices and experiences of those who contributed to the transition to peace and allowed us to lay the foundations for good governance and the rule of law in our country.

In conclusion, in our view, the Commission has made a difference in the countries under consideration. Other countries, such as my own, were not able, 15 years ago, to benefit from the existence of the Commission and had to deal with a great many challenges in the transition from conflict to peacebuilding and development. That is why we are immensely pleased with the holding of this debate. We urge the Security Council to continue to support the work of the Commission and to strengthen the new peacebuilding architecture of the United Nations.

The President: I thank the representative of El Salvador for her ideas for follow-up for the Peacebuilding Commission.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Qatar.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): First, Madam, I would like to congratulate you on your delegation's successful presidency of the Security Council and on having selected this important topic as a basis for today's discussion. I would also like to commend the Secretariat's efforts in support of peacebuilding.

I associate myself with the statement made by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Security Council's debate on peacebuilding centres on the role that the Council can play in conflict or post-conflict environments in the maintenance of international peace and security — in keeping, of course, with its mandate — including by authorizing multidimensional missions. We encourage coordination with the General Assembly and other relevant organs on peacebuilding and development.

The 2005 World Summit decided to establish the Peacebuilding Commission as an advisory body to both the General Assembly and the Security Council. Therefore, when the Council addresses issues of peacebuilding and development or the role and mandate of the Peacebuilding Commission, it is essential to coordinate those efforts with the Assembly, which established the Commission under its resolution 60/180, in parallel with Security Council resolution 1645 (2005). The Council is not in a position to assume alone the responsibility for long-term peacebuilding, given the scope and complexity of peacebuilding, which extends beyond threats to international peace and security. Post-conflict peacebuilding has thus become a multidimensional issue that requires concerted efforts by all United Nations agencies and partnerships with the international community based on national ownership and full respect for the sovereignty of the State in question, in accordance with the principles of the Charter and international law. Those principles are stipulated in the mandate of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The first year of the peacebuilding architecture that emerged from the 2005 World Summit witnessed the launching of the Peacebuilding Support Office within the Secretariat and of the Peacebuilding Fund, which provides funding for many development projects. Much progress has been achieved with regard to the organizational and procedural aspects of the Commission's work. We should therefore continue to build on the progress achieved thus far, such as the concrete results achieved on the ground in Burundi, Sierra Leone and, more recently, Guinea-Bissau.

More States must benefit from peacebuilding programmes, while due consideration must be paid to the differing conditions of each situation — and hence to the differing ways in which the peacebuilding process should be managed in different countries. Countries emerging from conflict must also have full national ownership of their peacebuilding process in a manner that serves the interests of their peoples. In accordance with the principle of sovereignty, their voluntary approval must be sought on programmes implemented within their borders, especially since those States have themselves sought the support of the international community.

It is imperative to formulate a United Nations exit strategy from post-conflict countries: countries emerging from conflict cannot remain on the United Nations agenda forever. Coordination with the State concerned is needed to develop a comprehensive development and capacity-building strategy, including an education strategy to teach young people about the culture of peace. We cannot expect a State to be in a position to achieve sustainable development without building its production capacity and without enabling it to enjoy economic and political independence. The role of the United Nations should therefore not be understood as that of an open-ended aid provider, but rather as that of a builder of sustainable projects. Relationships with international partners or United Nations missions should not be defined on a financial basis alone.

We regret that the Council is still unable to make use of Chapter VIII of the Charter with regard to cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations and bodies, especially in the adoption of Council resolutions involving collaboration between the United Nations and other organizations. During our membership of the Security Council, we long stressed the need to adopt such resolutions under Chapter VIII of the Charter so as not to sideline the role that the regional arrangements could play.

We hope that we have contributed to developing some ideas. It would be useful for the report of the Secretary-General called for in the draft presidential statement to include a positive clarification of these ideas and practical recommendations, in partnership with the General Assembly and other relevant organs of the United Nations.

The President: I thank the representative of Qatar for his focus on development of capacity and on regional arrangements.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Norway.

Mr. Løvald (Norway): I shall limit my remarks, and the full text of my statement will be circulated.

There is a need to recognize the critical importance of gaining a coherent understanding of recovery interventions and successful peacebuilding. The United Nations, its Member States and other international actors need to change their modes of operation in order to address the special needs of countries that are in, emerging from or affected by conflict. That is all the more true as peacebuilding becomes an integral part of our common United Nations agenda.

I want to focus on three issues.

First, with respect to leadership, it is important to remind ourselves that one of the key lessons from the Brahimi report is that failure is inevitable when peacekeeping becomes a substitute for facing painful the political compromises that are needed from all sides to achieve sustainable peace.

One of the findings from a project on multidimensional and integrated peace operations that Norway initiated in 2006 was the need to get a clear view of what needs to be achieved politically. That could assist in making the necessary distinction between humanitarian assistance in emergencies and the need for long-term recovery efforts. It requires the Secretary-General to take on a stronger role in guiding efforts inside the United Nations system, forging incentives for better coherence and integration.

Peacebuilding is not a sequential process; it needs to be looked at as a highly interlinked series of simultaneous activities. It is also important to speed up efforts in that regard, bringing on board all stakeholders — including the international financial institutions, donors and national counterparts to the countries concerned — to make sure that all are aware of what is to be expected, delivered, how it is to be delivered and by whom.

It is critical to ensure that the senior United Nations representative in the field has at her or his disposal a clear and robust mandate. The United Nations representative also needs to be backed by a strong and integrated leadership team. Member States need to adapt and change the current frameworks that guide both the administrative and budgeting processes. Today, success often depends on the personal capabilities of senior United Nations mission leaders to find ways of manoeuvring around the system, rather than as a result of it.

There is a need to address how to ensure more predictable and sustainable sources of funding. The current system for financing multidimensional peace operations does not allow for the adequate resourcing of multidimensional mandates with strong peacebuilding and recovery components. We need to think about how to create more organic links between assessed and voluntary funding sources.

Secondly, with respect to the peacebuilding architecture, the role of the Peacebuilding Commission in taking on an even stronger proactive and convening role in promoting better system coherence and integration should be examined. While the Commission has had a great deal of success in the past year, we still have a way to go to ensure effective coordination within the United Nations and with other partners. Norway, for its part, has been honoured to chair the Commission's efforts regarding Burundi, a country in need of even greater international attention and support.

As more countries are included on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda, we will have to take a closer look at its working methods. The focus will increasingly have to be country-specific in each particular case, relying on tailor-made approaches and always focusing on policy impact.

We agree with the Secretary-General that the evolution of the peacebuilding architecture constitutes a significant innovation in the ability of the United Nations to help countries in, emerging from or affected by conflict. Thus we emphasize efforts to develop country-specific strategies that bring on board all stakeholders, including national partners, and define responsibilities in line with both national and international programming objectives. Those frameworks are not academic exercises; they are essential tools in providing added value.

Thirdly, on civilian capabilities, an existing deficit of readily qualified and deployable civilian capabilities should be addressed in greater depth as a complement to increased emphasis on national ownership. That requires putting in place conditions and training systems that will sufficiently prepare them for operating in a multidimensional and integrated mission framework in countries that require robust recovery efforts. It also requires taking advantage of national rosters that can be rapidly deployed. But to repeat, that must be done to empower national authorities further, not to replace them.

There is a need to bridge the current security, development and humanitarian planning frameworks in order to effectively address the complex challenges at hand. We believe that this meeting is a critical starting point in providing the Secretary-General and the United Nations system with an endorsement of progress made so far, as well as providing the political incentives to further strengthen the implementation of the various reform initiatives in order to better assist countries emerging from or affected by conflict and to prevent a relapse by building sustainable peace.

The President: I thank the representative of Norway for his ideas for follow-up.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. Hill (Australia): I would like to thank the United Kingdom for holding this important debate.

How best to address post-conflict and post-crisis stabilization has been something Australia has been working on for some years now, be it in our role in the International Stabilization Force in Timor-Leste, in the regional assistance mission to the Solomon Islands, or in Bougainville, which was referred to in some detail by my friend the Ambassador of Papua New Guinea. We do not pretend to have all the answers, but we have learnt a number of lessons similar to those that the United Kingdom has drawn together. In many ways those lessons are obvious ones, but even simple truths bear repeating.

The speed and strength of an initial response are of the essence. Following any conflict or crisis, there may be a limited window of opportunity to consolidate peace and commence rebuilding on a sound foundation, in cooperation with national authorities. Similarly, quick military intervention is at times the best way to save lives. The quick deployments by ourselves, Malaysia, New Zealand and Portugal in May 2006 to Timor-Leste at the request of its Government demonstrated that. The same principle applies to police deployments.

We need the same flexibility and preparedness for other civilian elements, although in our case we would not look to maintain a large, multidisciplinary team on a just-in-case basis; for us, we take a just-in-time approach using teams drawn on a case-by-case basis from both our national and State levels of Government and subject matter experts from the wider Australian community. But we look forward to hearing more from the United Kingdom as it develops its deployable civilian capability.

Demonstrating to a population that security has been restored is the first step. That demonstration is made tangible by a full re-establishment of the rule of law, transitional justice and quick development outcomes. To achieve those, we need to ensure that we are drawing on the full range of our own expertise.

In that regard, Australia is establishing the Asia-Pacific Centre for Civil-Military Cooperation as an essential part of our commitment to regional stability and development. The Centre will focus on supporting a coherent national capability to assess, plan for and implement integrated peacebuilding, stabilization, reconstruction and international disaster relief operations.

It is important to build up not just our own capacities, but also those of others. It is obvious to say this, but it would always be preferable to have built up capacities before a crisis than to act as a substitute afterwards. To that end, our Federal Police is the first police force to conduct United Nations-recognized predeployment training that meets the requirements for United Nations peace operations.

No matter how good international assistance may be, if it does not serve the national needs of the country concerned, there is little point in providing it. Our help must build up national institutions and leaders. And the sooner we can back local authorities in reassuming full responsibility, the better chance there will be of a sustainable solution. The importance of diplomatic efforts alongside security and development engagement must also be recognized. We should ensure that diplomacy is used to stronger effect, particularly in situations where skilled diplomatic negotiations may prevent a relapse into conflict.

The United Nations clearly has an important role in promoting post-conflict and post-crisis stabilization. We would welcome further advice from the Secretary-General on how the Organization's contribution in this area could be strengthened.

The President: I thank the representative of Australia for his intervention and for offering lessons learned from Australia's own experience.

I now call on the representative of Liechtenstein.

Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein): We thank you, Madam President, for organizing this debate as well as for producing a concept paper. This debate comes at an opportune moment. The demand for peacekeeping has reached an unprecedented scale and it is certainly timely for the United Nations membership to take a look at the activities it undertakes after conflicts have ended. The increase in costs for peacekeeping operations certainly entails the risk that the resources necessary for post-conflict peacebuilding may not be made available.

Today we are not, of course, discussing a new topic — quite the opposite. The presidency's concept paper illustrates this. It quotes from the Brahimi report published in the year 2000 (S/2000/809), and it is quite appropriate that Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi was invited to address the Council today. We very much appreciated his presentation this morning, which focused strongly on very practical aspects of post-conflict peacebuilding and, of course, on his first-hand experience. His comments deserve particular attention, especially on the need to create national and local ownership, and to rely, therefore, to the fullest extent possible, on human resources in those countries where peacebuilding activities are undertaken.

The fact that some parts of the Brahimi report have still not been implemented after all these years illustrates the fact that progress in this area has been slow. Nevertheless, it has been steady, and it has received an important boost through the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, which has turned out to be one of the most important results of the 2005 World Summit. The work that the Commission has carried out so far has clearly had positive effects, and we hope that its potential can be fully explored in the future. In particular, it should be able to consider situations immediately after a conflict has ended and a ceasefire or peace accord has entered into force. In addition, it must be understood that post-conflict peacebuilding is always also a tool for conflict prevention and there should be an exchange of best practices from both fields.

One feature of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission that merits increased attention and further consideration is its practice of considering situations in various configurations in order to ensure optimal inclusion of the stakeholders. That is a very interesting formula that could perhaps also be successfully applied to the work of the Security Council itself.

The rule of law plays a central role in the stabilization of countries and societies in post-conflict situations. It is our hope that the Rule of Law Unit, whose establishment required much more time than we had expected, will play a positive role in that respect. Efforts by the United Nations to secure the rule of law over the long term can be successful only if they tap extensively into local and national capacities and if they expand expertise in all relevant areas.

In addition, increased attention must be given to transitional justice needs, if and where they exist. The international community has accumulated extensive experience and expertise on that issue in recent years and has developed various models and modalities to satisfy transitional justice needs. The International Criminal Court can play a particular role in that regard, and we hope that it will be given the required political support, including by the Security Council. In particular, the Council has to recognize that the principles of peace and justice are complementary, mutually reinforcing and, in combination, form an indispensable ingredient of post-conflict peacebuilding.

The presidency's concept paper identifies rapid and flexible funding as a major challenge. At a time of rapidly increasing costs for peacekeeping, that challenge is likely to be exacerbated in the near future. Since peacebuilding is a form of conflict prevention, it can in principle be very cost-effective. However, experience — such as the examples given in the concept paper — has shown that little or no money may be available during the initial phase after a conflict, when it is most needed and when the direction for the future process is set. Even though the activities are very different in nature, it would appear that there is some similarity, in terms of the funding dynamic, to the humanitarian work of the Organization. Therefore, funding mechanisms designed following the example of the Central Emergency Response Fund — which has served the purposes of humanitarian assistance quite well — seem to be worth exploring.

The President: I thank the representative of Liechtenstein for that very thoughtful intervention and for highlighting justice issues.

I now call on the representative of Benin.

Mr. Zinsou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): My delegation expresses its condolences to China and Myanmar on the disasters that have so gravely affected them. We also associate ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

My delegation congratulates you, Madam, on your country's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May. We welcome the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Kingdom, which lends particular dignity to this meeting. It is proof — as if that were needed — of your country's commitment to United Nations activities in the area of peacebuilding and to strengthening the Commission established to promote it.

The Peacebuilding Commission provides a forum not only for consultation and coordination, but also for reflection to come up with integrated strategies setting out priorities for coherent support to be provided to countries emerging from conflict. In that regard, the Commission can help the Security Council define, in direct dialogue with the parties to peace agreements, the configurations of missions to be deployed and of integrated mandates likely to promote synergies for coherent action on the ground.

The Working Group established by the Commission to capitalize on lessons learned can play an effective role in that context. The Commission can enter into contact with national actors, regional organizations, bilateral and multilateral partners and interested civil society actors so as to put in place coherent support programmes aimed at helping prevent a relapse into conflict and putting the country concerned back on the path towards peace.

Mandates can no longer be established without such prior consultation. Once the mandates have been defined, the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General should fully utilize their influence and the civil and military means at their disposal to ensure that the parties participate in good faith in normalization processes.

The United Nations should help countries to mobilize the expertise that is needed to establish the institutions to meet national needs. If a critical mass of human resources is lacking in the country, then one should call on the diaspora. Nationals should be put back in charge who can work together with United Nations experts on defining recovery processes. In order to play its role as guarantor of universal norms, the United Nations must develop the competent and neutral international expertise to meet technical assistance needed in post-conflict situations.

In the specific area of security sector reform, the United Nations should increase its operational capacity, drawing up rosters of experts standing by for deployment, with a certification system based on competencies defined in agreement with Member States. Particularly in the field of the police, the United Nations should develop partnerships with countries that have regional training centres so that their curricula can include material relevant to participation in integrated operations. Special attention should be given to those areas where it is a matter of re-establishing law-enforcement functions, since the whole State apparatus has to start working again so that the rule of law, which is crucial to normalization in all other areas of life, can be re-established.

My country, Benin, experienced a national crisis in the late 1980s. It was able to recover through a national initiative, but it could not have succeeded without the multifaceted support we received as we emerged from crisis. Our development partners agreed to pay civil servants so that the public services could resume. The transitional Government received substantial budgetary assistance and focused technical assistance from bilateral and multilateral partners. This enabled us to revive the economy on a new basis and, above all, it enabled us to establish institutions that were effective in taking up the challenges facing us in the area of maintaining political stability and managing development efforts.

Especially in the political arena, as one Government democratically succeeded another, Benin acquired some expertise in the area of how to strengthen national institutions and manage the rule of law. We are ready to share our experience with other countries facing difficulties in that sphere. Indeed, we are already sharing our experiences within the International Organization of la Francophonie, the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States.

One lesson learned from the experience of countries emerging from conflict is that lack of resources to consolidate achievements and the consequent inability to function are among the reasons for the failure of peace agreements. New institutions can be credible only if they are able to perform in a way that will command respect and establish their legitimacy in the eyes of the citizens. This, of course, means fully respecting human rights, establishing mechanisms that will ensure good governance, looking after those who have been victims and establishing transitional justice that reconciles the need to combat impunity with the aspirations for national reconciliation. Security sector and judicial reform are of paramount importance and should be given special attention and careful follow-up.

Another prerequisite for peacebuilding is having a peacetime economy replace the wartime economy by creating the conditions for the resumption of healthy economic activity, combating all kinds of trafficking and ensuring that the country can rejoin the world economy and move towards sustainable human development. This requires proper management of available resources, fair regulation of peaceful economic activities, whether it be the exploitation of natural resources or in the service sector.

In this connection, my delegation has always had reservations about long-term embargoes on the exploitation of the natural resources of countries emerging from conflict. The enormous need for financing for recovery and reconstruction can be met only if the domestic resources of the country are mobilized and transparently and sensibly used. Particularly in countries where inequitable distribution of income from the exploitation of natural resources was one of the causes of conflict, peace agreements must be crystal clear on the conditions for exploitation of natural resources and on the modalities of redistribution.

The international community should use its influence to help put in place agreed management machinery, as it did in the case of Liberia with the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme. The cooperation framework set up for the implementation of the Peacebuilding Fund's support to beneficiary countries must take account of the need to guide them quickly towards mobilizing their domestic resources so that they can make better use of the available outside assistance. The resources allocated by the Fund should give rise to catalytic activities that can later be assisted by financing from bilateral and multilateral partners and private-sector investment.

A third and last area that my delegation thinks is of paramount importance is establishing a culture of peace. This means the setting up of systems to identify and address problems that could undermine the national consensus — which means agreement on how to preserve the fabric and unity of the country. Government mediators have a role to play: they can help Governments to quickly defuse any disputes that may arise in the management of public affairs. In addition to a mediator, Benin now has a new body called the Office of the High Commissioner on Participatory Governance. This was established together with the United Nations Democracy Fund. Its job is to lead the national dialogue on substantive matters relating to national life and to seek agreed solutions.

Those are just a few examples of how to meet the need of every country emerging from conflict to find practical ways of peacefully resolving national disputes so that they can bolster their citizens' desire to live together in peace and strengthen national cohesion. This must involve all players in the life of the nation. Development partners should also offer the necessary support to the countries concerned.

The President: I thank the representative of Benin for that very well-considered intervention and for offering us some of his own experiences and thoughts on follow-up.

We have had a long but very good discussion today, and I would like to thank all delegations for their thoughtful and thought-provoking interventions. My thanks go also to the Secretary-General, the World Bank, the Foreign Ministry of Sierra Leone and Mr. Brahimi for their presentations.

I think we highlighted a wide-ranging set of themes that included, but were not necessarily limited to, national ownership, including, where appropriate, a role for the diaspora; inclusivity, including within United Nations institutions; security; mandates; development; regional and national experiences; the importance of coordination; the need for both quick responses and long-term sustainability; the importance of justice; resolution 1325 (2000); and the importance of getting adequate resources, among many others. We look forward to discussing these issues with colleagues, delegations and representatives in the appropriate various United Nations forums.

And, of course, we also heard today about food security, which has been taken forward by the Economic and Social Council.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

> "The Security Council recalls its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and emphasizes the critical importance of post-conflict peacebuilding in laying the foundation for sustainable peace and development after the scourge of war.
>
> "The Security Council recognizes that supporting States to recover from conflict and build sustainable peace is a major challenge facing the international community, and that an effective response requires political, security, humanitarian and development activities to be integrated and coherent, including in the first phase of integrated mission planning.
>
> "The Security Council emphasizes the importance of national ownership and the primary responsibility of national authorities emerging from conflict for peacebuilding and sustainable development, expresses its intention to support those efforts and encourages other actors to do the same.
>
> "The Security Council recalls its resolution 1645 (2005) and welcomes the work of the Peacebuilding Commission in advising on the coordination of international peacebuilding activities and resources, and expresses its support for enhancing the role of the Peacebuilding Commission, Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund.
>
> "The Security Council recognizes that, in particular in the immediate aftermath of conflict, affected countries have urgent needs including, but not limited to, the re-establishment of the institutions of Government, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed forces, security sector reform, transitional justice, reconciliation, re-establishing the rule of law and respect for human rights, and economic revitalization. The Security Council underlines that civilian expertise in post-conflict peacebuilding is essential in helping to meet these needs.
>
> "The Security Council encourages efforts to address the urgent need for rapidly deployable civilian expertise and stresses that the critical role for such expertise is working in cooperation with national authorities to strengthen national capacities.
>
> "The Security Council highlights the need for the United Nations to play a leading role in the field in coordinating international efforts in post-conflict situations. The Security Council stresses that coordination between national authorities and others involved in longer-term reconstruction and development, including organs of the United Nations system in accordance with their respective mandates, the international financial institutions as well as with civil society and the business sector, is vital for the success of United Nations and international engagement in post-conflict situations.
>
> "The Security Council stresses the need to ensure that finance is available from the outset for recovery and peacebuilding activities to meet immediate needs, and to lay a solid foundation for longer-term reconstruction and development. The Security Council reaffirms the role of regional organizations in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in

accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, and the need to strengthen the capacity of regional organizations in helping countries recover from conflict.

"The Security Council encourages the Secretary-General, the Peacebuilding Commission, international and regional organizations and Member States to consider how to support national efforts in affected countries to secure a sustainable peace more rapidly and effectively, including in the areas of coordination, civilian deployment capabilities and financing. The Security Council invites the Secretary-General to provide advice within 12 months to the relevant United Nations organs on how best to take forward these issues within the United Nations system and, taking into consideration the views of the Peacebuilding Commission, how to coordinate peacebuilding activities and encourage the mobilization and most effective use of resources for urgent peacebuilding needs".

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2008/16.

There are no further speakers on my list. Once again, I would like to thank participants for attending. I also thank our interpreters and the Secretariat.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 7.10 p.m.

United Nations

S/PV.5896

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5896th meeting

Thursday, 22 May 2008, 3.55 p.m.
New York

President:	Sir John Sawers	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Dhaene
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Kafando
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Weisleder
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Mubarak
	Panama	Mr. De Vengoechea
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United States of America	Mr. Wolff
	Viet Nam	Mr. Hoang Chi Trung

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

The meeting was called to order at 3.55 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Lebanon, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Salam (Lebanon) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

> "The Security Council congratulates the leaders and people of Lebanon and welcomes and strongly supports the agreement reached in Doha on 21 May under the auspices of the Arab League, which constitutes an essential step towards the resolution of the current crisis, the return to the normal functioning of Lebanese democratic institutions, and the complete restoration of Lebanon's unity and stability.
>
> "It commends the efforts of the Arab League, in particular of the committee of Foreign Ministers, under the leadership of the Emir of the State of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabr Al-Thani, and Secretary-General Amr Moussa, in helping Lebanese leaders reach an agreement.
>
> "The Security Council welcomes the agreement to elect a president of the Republic, to establish a national unity cabinet and to address Lebanon's electoral law, in accordance with the Arab League initiative, as well as the decision to continue the national dialogue on ways to reinforce the authority of the State over all its territory in such a way as to guarantee the sovereignty and the safety of the State and the people of Lebanon. It welcomes the agreement to ban the use of weapons and violence as a means to settle disputes, irrespective of their nature and under any circumstances.
>
> "It calls for the implementation of this agreement in its entirety, in accordance with the Arab League initiative and in conformity with the Taif agreement and all relevant Security Council resolutions and statements of its President on the situation in Lebanon.
>
> "The Security Council reaffirms its strong support for the territorial integrity, sovereignty, unity and political independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized borders and under the sole and exclusive authority of the Government of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2008/17.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5897

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5897th meeting
Thursday, 22 May 2008, 4 p.m.
New York

President: **Sir John Sawers** (**United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**)

Belgium	**Mr. Belle**
Burkina Faso	**Mr. Kafando**
China	**Mr. Du Xiacong**
Costa Rica	**Mr. Ballestero**
Croatia	**Mr. Vilović**
France	**Mr. De Rivière**
Indonesia	**Mr. Natalegawa**
Italy	**Mr. Spatafora**
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	**Mr. Mubarak**
Panama	**Mr. Arias**
Russian Federation	**Mr. Desyatnikov**
South Africa	**Mr. Kumalo**
United States of America	**Mr. DeLaurentis**
Viet Nam	**Mr. Hoang Chi Trung**

Agenda

The situation in Burundi

Third report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (S/2008/330)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the

The meeting was called to order at 4 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Burundi

Third report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (S/2008/330)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Burundi, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Nsanze (Burundi) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Johan Løvald, Chairman of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Norway.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Løvald to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2008/330, which contains the third report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Johan Løvald, to whom I now give the floor.

Mr. Løvald: I want to thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to participate in your meeting on Burundi in my capacity as Chair of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission. It is timely that the Security Council once more is focusing on the situation in Burundi.

I have just returned from Burundi, together with a delegation from the Peacebuilding Commission, and it must be said that Burundi is presently facing a number of difficult challenges requiring international attention. Allow me to highlight some of them.

First, with regard to the security situation, it goes without saying that the present security situation in the country is of particular concern. It is clear that without peace and security, there can be no development or economic recovery. The recent and ongoing fighting between Palipehutu-Forces nationales de libération (FNL) and Government security forces is a source of deep concern. The return of the Palipehutu-FNL to Bujumbura last week is promising, however. Without Palipehutu-FNL's return to the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism and the full implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement of 2006, the concrete peace consolidation gains that Burundi has achieved so far will be jeopardized. Several thousand people who have been internally displaced as a result of the recent fighting add in a dramatic way to the seriousness of the present security situation.

Secondly, with regard to the Parliament, there is also reason for concern over the recent political crisis that continues to block its work. The political parties need to find a way out of the present impasse in a spirit of reconciliation and dialogue, so that the Parliament can resume functioning when it meets again in June. A continued deadlock not only undermines trust in the political system, it will also impact negatively on international efforts to assist Burundi.

The third challenge is the elections. The 2010 national elections are already high on the political agenda in Burundi. Successful democratic elections will be important for the development of the country. In that regard, I would like to underline the importance of preparing a roadmap for holding the elections in a timely, well-prepared and transparent manner, and of the establishment of a national electoral commission. The Peacebuilding Commission is committed to supporting efforts in that respect and invites the Government to initiate that process.

Fourth is the concern over the land issue, for Burundi is a densely populated country. The return of a large number of refugees who went into exile in 1972 and 1993 will exacerbate an already existing problem of land and will pose an additional challenge to the State's administrative, judicial and legislative capacity, and it could be a source of tension for the consolidation of peace in Burundi. I want to bring to the attention of Council members that the Peacebuilding Commission will have, on 27 May, a thematic meeting on land issues in Burundi, with particular focus on the return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

Fifthly and finally, with regard to the economic situation, Burundi is among the poorest countries in the world, and it is experiencing extra suffering under the present international economic situation. As described in the report of the Secretary-General, the country continues to suffer from structural poverty and stagnating standards. That complicates peacebuilding efforts and underscores the need for continued support from the international community.

Last time I addressed the Council in my capacity of Chair of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, at the 5793rd meeting on 6 December 2007, I reported that the Commission the day before had adopted the Monitoring and Tracking Mechanism for the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding and had entered the implementation phase of its work. Hence, we have focused on how to assist Burundi in responding to our common peacebuilding priorities. Now we are preparing for the first biannual review of the implementation of the Strategic Framework at the end of June.

The Government of Burundi and its partners have instituted an inclusive and participatory process to prepare for the biannual review. Diverse stakeholders, including representatives of the Government, political parties, civil society organizations, the private sector, women's organizations, the national council of wise men, religious groups and international partners, are all involved.

I would like commend the Government and all the national stakeholders for their constructive engagement in the implementation of the Strategic Framework and the review process. It is encouraging that the Government of Burundi has been able to give priority to this in the present situation. It shows commitment. Let me also use this occasion to thank the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB) for assisting the Peacebuilding Commission and the Government of Burundi so ably in that regard.

The Peacebuilding Commission is committed to undertaking urgent action, should the biannual review in June reveal gaps that need to be filled in order for our efforts to succeed — and indeed they must.

To sum up, peacebuilding is at present under stress in Burundi. The following courses of action commend themselves.

First, given the present challenges facing the country, the international community must reiterate its pledge of solidarity with Burundi and remain steadfast in its support for peacebuilding in the country.

Secondly, the security situation in the country, and its potential regional implications, must be given special and ongoing attention. In particular, we must consider how we can best support the full implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement from 2006. The entry into force of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region offers an additional avenue for support.

Thirdly, in that respect we must welcome the statement of the Political Directorate of 18 May in which the Government of Burundi and the Palipehutu-FNL reiterated their commitment to respect the terms of the Agreement of Principles towards lasting peace, security and stability signed on 18 June 2006 and the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement of 7 September 2006.

Fourthly, we must also welcome that the two parties agree that the current hostilities should cease immediately in the event all obligations of the Government of Burundi and the Palipehutu-FNL are respected.

Those commitments are indeed the crux of the matter. As always, the primary responsibility rests with the parties themselves. Yet the Regional Initiative and the South African Facilitation have taken on a crucial role. This Council and, indeed, the international community must give full support to their efforts at this critical time. The international community must stand together in pushing the peace process forward. In the report of the Secretary-General, special attention is given to the fragile situation in the country. We must encourage the Secretary-General to remain focused on the situation and, at all times, to consider bringing to bear the full weight of his good offices should the situation warrant it.

Sixth, continued attention by the Security Council to the security situation is, of course, especially important. The Council must follow the present situation closely. As we approach the elections in 2010, we are entering a period of potentially greater instability. That may require increased vigilance on the part of the international community.

Seventh, the Peacebuilding Commission itself is, of course, actively seized of the situation in Burundi at the present time. It must be said quite clearly that all Peacebuilding Commission members remain strongly committed to peacebuilding in Burundi. That was reiterated during our recent visit there. At the same time, it is also clear that practical peacebuilding can succeed only when all stakeholders are clearly committed to peace.

Eighth, there can be no doubt that Burundians want peace and development. At this time, it is of particular importance that the commitments made by the international community to reconstruction and development be honoured. The present difficult international economic situation underscores this.

Ninth and finally, it would be a highly meaningful response to the country's situation if the political parties in parliament could resume their important work without further delay. That would also seem necessary in order to begin well-organized preparations for the upcoming elections at an early date, thus making sure that they will be free and fair and will contribute to political stability.

A future free from fear and want is also available to all Burundians. It will require determination by all in order for them to get there. This is the time for Burundians to come together and to overcome the difficulties. At the same time, the international community must remain vigilant and unequivocal in its determination to support them in this important struggle.

The President: I thank Mr. Løvald for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Burundi.

Mr. Nsanze (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): Permit me at the outset, on the occasion of the presentation of the third report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (S/2008/330), to express my heartfelt thanks to the Secretary-General for the United Nations assistance from which my country has benefited for some 15 years. My sincere thanks go also to all members of the Security Council, who are constantly following the developments in the situation, and for the proposed solutions that they are tirelessly providing. In addition, I wish to thank the international community as a whole — all those who, near or far away, observe and act when they deem it useful.

My delegation takes note of the third report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi. That report, like the previous ones, is very well documented and provides as many details as possible on the developments in the situation, supported by relatively convincing explanations. It is full of information, just as the period covered has been full of events, although we note some anachronisms and contradictions.

From reading the report, one gets the impression that the country is once again entering an infernal cycle of violence, at a time when the international community was expecting the re-establishment of peace and recovery through a decisive mobilization aimed at development. Undoubtedly, it was in the context of fear and uncertainty caused by the attacks of the Forces nationales de libération (FNL) on Bujumbura and a number of other areas that the report was written against a background of pessimism.

Very fortunately, subsequent events have made it possible to regain confidence and to look to the future with greater optimism. Indeed, the FNL's long-awaited return to the negotiation table and the resumption of the work of the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism are reassuring both to Burundians themselves and to the international community. Here, I should like to thank all actors, particularly the Security Council, the Regional Peace Initiative on Burundi, the South African mediation and the Peacebuilding Commission, which did their utmost to make that return possible.

However, that optimism may fade once again if useful measures are not taken to consolidate the gains already made, while we mobilize to achieve other milestones in order to move decisively forward. We cannot predict here the outcome of the negotiations under way. But, however they may develop, the Security Council and the international community in general must help us ensure that it will not be possible to turn back. The spectre and the psychosis of a new war must be banished forever. That will be possible if, in particular, the Chairman of the FNL, Agathon Rwasa, also returns to the country to take part in political life.

Moreover, certain political parties that are adopting a belligerent posture, even though they are no longer supposed to be in the opposition, should be brought to reason. The same applies to other political parties or factions, groups and even individuals who — hiding behind a constitution that is ill conceived and, for the time being, impossible to revise — prefer to sow disorder in order to test the Government.

We note other points in the report that are deserving of our comments. We shall not dwell on them here; there are other forums and many opportunities to discuss them. We will address only those related to institutional deadlock, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and transitional justice.

In paragraph 91 of the report, we read, "All political parties represented in Parliament are reminded in this regard of their obligations to those who have elected them, and to the country as a whole". That is particularly true because many members of parliament themselves do not know that they have a mandate from the people. A number of them even seem to be unaware of which political parties they belong to, even though they were elected on closed lists of candidates submitted by well-known political parties. Others have simply left their parties and claim to be independent. All of them are distorting good democratic practice. We must find mechanisms to restore order and to oblige everyone to act within a legal framework. If the constitution turns out to be an obstacle, then it will have to be revised.

The threat to peace can also stem from discontent, even from despair brought about by the uncertainty faced by former soldiers and combatants, who have returned to civilian life without sufficient means to reintegrate into society. That is all entirely true. That is why the Government is in the process of knocking at every door in order to find additional resources to take up the challenge of raising the living standards of these people. Will it manage to do this? Perhaps, if the appeals that it is making are heeded.

As concerns transitional justice, first of all it should be acknowledged that judicial reform has not yet achieved the desired results. Here we would like to praise the substantial support that the Peacebuilding Commission has given us in this regard, and we appeal to all who wish to offer support and can do so to do the same. We are thinking, in particular, of our partners who promised funds during the round table held in Bujumbura in May 2007, and would ask them to discharge their obligations.

As for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, it has had some difficulty in getting started for several reasons. The most plausible of those is that some groups and individuals who are not prepared to face up to the evidence against them prefer to confuse the issue as they rush to obtain support against the process. We would ask the United Nations to be cautious, because some will seek to use it for that purpose.

The President: There are no further speakers on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultation, I should now like to invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on this subject.

The meeting rose at 4.25 p.m.